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ABSTRACT

This guide is written for college students, faculty, administrators, and staff who would like to get involved in literacy work. Following an introduction, chapter 2 provides basic information about literacy in the United States. Chapter 3 uses a question and answer format to tell how to start a campus program. Chapter 4 discusses how to work with learners, community literacy programs, and other community organizations and agencies. Chapter 5 gives program ideas, including: tutoring; testing learners; learner orientation; tutor orientation and training; learning materials production; recruiting volunteers and learners; providing child care, transportation, and other support services; fundraising; public relations; conferences and meetings; and award ceremonies. Chapter 6 suggests integrating college curriculum and the provision of services to literacy programs. Chapter 7 concentrates on recruiting learners and tutors and promoting the program. Chapter 8 gives overall advice about training and supervising literacy work. Developing funds is the subject of chapter 9. Existing programs at 13 colleges are described in chapter 10. Chapter 11 is intended to give readers a sense of the variety of issues that concern people who work with and study literacy. Chapter 12 contains information on how to contact 21 organizations that are considered resources for literacy work. The document concludes with a 17-item bibliography and a list of 6 related publications. (CML)

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Literacy Action

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A Resource Book For Colleges and Universities

by Louisa B. Meacham
of the Campus Outreach Opportunity League

with
Beverly Schwartzberg
of Campus Compact:
The Project for Public and Community Service

SECOND EDITION

research made possible by a grant from ACTION/VISTA
second edition made possible by a grant from the Cudahy Fund

Literacy Action

A Resource Book for Colleges and Universities

Literacy: An Overview

Starting a Program

Working With the Community

Taking Action: Program Ideas

Literacy and Learning: Obtaining Academic Credit

Recruiting and Promotion

Training and Supervision

Fund Development

Program Profiles

Issues

Resources and Contacts

Second Edition

by Louisa B. Meacham, COOL

with Beverly Schwartzberg, Campus Compact

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Meacham, Louisa B. with Beverly Schwartzberg
LITERACY ACTION:
A RESOURCE BOOK FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

To
Sandra Fuller Barlow,
Jamie Forgione
and
Paul Movsesian

I'd like to learn the word 'respect' and the word 'dignity.'

Jamie, age 23

Somerville, New Jersey
December 1985

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INTRODUCTION 1

Introduction

This resource and information guide is written for students, faculty, administrators, and staff at colleges and universities who are interested in getting involved in literacy work. Literacy, defined as "the ability to read and write," came prominently into the public eye in the 1980s. Television ads, posters, books, reports, and studies all tell us that there is a "literacy crisis" in America. Numbers ranging from 13 to 27 to even 60 million are cited when identifying the number of adults in the United States who are illiterate or functionally illiterate. While there is debate about the exact number of illiterate Americans, and even confusion about what it means to be literate in our society, there is no question that there are large numbers of people in the United States who cannot read and need help.

There are large numbers of people in the United States who cannot read and need help.

Purpose of the book

This guide, prepared by the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) in conjunction with the Campus Compact: The Project for Public and Community Service, is an attempt to help those of you at colleges and universities—students, faculty, administrators, and staff—who are concerned about men and women struggling to function in a world that demands literacy of its people. Although this book gives primary emphasis to adult literacy programs, working with children and teenagers is a fundamental part of any community literacy effort. The purpose of this book is to help develop and maintain strong programs which join college and university communities with local literacy efforts. Such programs promote an awareness of the literacy problem in the United States, work to meet the self-determined needs of learners and, where possible, link to other community service programs already in place on campus and in the local community.

The purpose of this book is to help develop and maintain strong programs which join colleges and universities with local literacy efforts.

What are COOL and Campus Compact?

The Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) is a national, nonprofit organization which promotes and supports student involvement in addressing community needs. COOL's mission is to strengthen, through service and in an environment of diversity, the capacity of students for sustained thoughtful action, and to create a student voice in the community to address the challenges we face as a society. COOL's national network includes more than 600 campuses and 250 national, state, and local organizations. In addition to direct on-campus outreach work, COOL has developed resources to help build stronger, more comprehensive student community service programs. COOL's staff of recent college graduates provide services which include: on-site technical assistance; a newsletter and resource books; state, regional and national conferences; and research on such issues as racism, hunger, homelessness, and literacy.

Campus Compact: The Project for Public and Community Service is a coalition of college and university presidents established to create public service opportunities for their students and to develop an expectation of service as an integral part of student life and the college experience. The staff of Campus Compact provides resources and technical assistance to help implement and expand service programs. These services include: regional workshops, site visits to campuses, a newsletter, and a clearinghouse of collegiate community service programs and institutional policies. Campus Compact members pursue federal and state policy that encourages student involvement in public service activities. Members also promote public awareness about the value of civic involvement as part of the college experience.

Why is this book needed?

Higher education can contribute special resources to working for literacy.

COOL and Campus Compact believe there is a potentially huge pool of individuals and groups at colleges and universities which can participate in public and community service in creative and useful ways. Higher education, which has been traditionally in the forefront of recognizing and working to alleviate social problems, has a special interest in adult literacy. Dedicated to learning, teaching, research and service, colleges and universities place a high value on a literate populace.

Higher education can contribute special resources to working for literacy. Colleges and universities can be centers of activism, where students, faculty, staff, and administrators work to create a change on campus and in the community. The energy of college students and the skills and interest of higher education professionals are a large, and mainly untapped, resource in the effort to increase literacy in the United States.

What is in this book?

Chapter 2: Literacy: An Overview provides basic information about the issue of literacy in the United States. How is literacy defined? What constitutes literacy or illiteracy? Who is affected by illiteracy? What has happened in the past when the United States attempted to address this issue? This chapter will answer some questions and serve as a starting point for further research into literacy.

Chapters 3-6 give practical advice about how to get involved in local literacy efforts in thoughtful and effective ways. These chapters explore some of the questions to ask yourself, your campus community and your local community.

- ☐ What are other concerned citizens already doing?
- ☐ What roles can you play in addition to those of a tutor or teacher's aide?
- ☐ How can you use your skills and the resources of the university to effect change?
- ☐ How can you go about helping another person read and write?

These chapters are the heart of the book, because they provide the crucial link between thought, action, and reflection.

Foster the crucial link between thought, action, and reflection.

Chapters 7-9 concentrate on recruiting and promotion, training and supervision, and fund development. Once again, practical advice and concrete examples will help as you plan a literacy project at your institution.

Chapter 10: Program Profiles gives examples of programs at colleges and universities across the country which already are involved in literacy work. Names and addresses accompany each profile in case you need more information.

Chapter 11: Issues provides you with a series of articles written by educators, adult learners, and literacy advocates on topics ranging from a learner's perceptions of a literacy conference to how to use poetry with adult learners.

Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts contains a bibliography and a list of contacts and sources of literacy information. The final chapter also contains a comment and update page for readers to complete and return to COOL.

Depending on your prior experience and knowledge of literacy, you may use the book as a whole to start a new literacy effort at your institution or you may use parts of the book to generate new program ideas and contacts for an existing program.

Terminology

A note on the terms used throughout the resource book: in order to avoid confusion, the word "*learner*" is used to refer to a person who is enrolled as a student in a literacy program. The term "*student*" refers to undergraduates or graduate students at colleges or universities. "*Literacy service provider*" is a local, national or regional agency or organization which offers tutoring or teaching to adults or teenagers.

A springboard for action

"You can read and write. Share it with others."

This book is a springboard for action. It is an attempt to encourage thoughtful and responsible involvement in literacy work. It has been three years since *Literacy Action* was first published. Since that time, new campus programs have been created, federal money is now available for linking literacy service and the college curriculum, a host of new national organizations offer resources in the areas of literacy and technology, and family literacy. Finally, a student network, the Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE) seeks to unite students working to increase literacy. This second edition reflects these developments in campus involvement in literacy.

Learning fosters knowledge; knowledge brings power. By becoming an advocate for literacy and taking action to help others learn, you, your institution and the local community can benefit enormously. "You have a skill you can share and you may not even realize it—you can read and write," writes a man who has worked in literacy projects for many years. "Share it with others."

Louisa B. Meacham, Campus Outreach Opportunity League
Saint Paul, Minnesota, June 1990

LITERACY: AN OVERVIEW 2

What is Literacy?

When people first hear statistics about the number of illiterate adults in the United States, they are inclined to doubt what they hear. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 26 million adults in the United States cannot read or write well enough to perform the basic reading and writing tasks considered essential to functional literacy. These tasks include such everyday functions as reading a newspaper or addressing an envelope. Another 45 million adults are only marginally competent at basic skills. This means that approximately one out of every three Americans over the age of sixteen cannot read or write well enough to be considered fully literate.

Illiteracy in the United States is not confined to any particular community.

Illiteracy in the United States is not confined to any particular community, area of the country, economic class, or specific ethnic group. The problem cuts across state lines and community boundaries. The highest rates of illiteracy are found among economically disadvantaged groups. Illiteracy rates are also high among the unemployed and among prison populations. But the problem does not stop there. Many illiterate Americans live in middle- or upper-class environments. Many are employed and have high school diplomas.

There is no single cause of illiteracy. Some illiterate adults may have grown up in families of non-readers, where reading was not encouraged. Others may be victims of socio-economic or racial discrimination. Individuals may have dropped out of school because of frequent family moves, long-term illness, or employment at a young age. Many adults with reading problems have learning disabilities. For some, illiteracy is not an isolated problem; it can be accompanied by a complex set of other needs.

Literacy, most simply defined, is the ability to read and write.

Literacy, most simply defined, is the ability to read and write a given language. To many, the issue seems clear-cut: either one is literate or one is not. Upon closer examination, however, the issue becomes less well-defined. What does it mean to be literate? What is illiteracy? Does an individual become literate after writing his or her first word? Or upon reading a first book? Does one become literate when one finishes fourth grade? Eighth grade? Or when one graduates from high school? The answers to these questions lie in how one chooses to measure literacy. There are a variety of ways to measure literacy skills and, therefore, a variety of answers to these questions.

Measuring literacy

The Census Bureau has used "years of schooling" to measure literacy. The fifth-grade level was established as the cut-off point; in other words, everyone with a fifth-grade education or beyond has been assumed to be literate. But such a conclusion is not necessarily justified. Even if a fifth-grade reading level determined the line between literacy and illiteracy in today's society, not all fifth graders read on the fifth-grade level. In addition, individuals who once read on a fifth-grade level can lose their reading skills without practice. This definition of illiteracy provides few clues to the individual's ability to complete a number of tasks essential to modern-day survival, like recognizing street signs, reading medicine labels, and filling out job applications.

More recently, standards to measure "functional literacy" have been developed. The Adult Performance Level (APL) test, developed at the University of Texas in 1975, measures skills through a number of common tasks, such as writing checks, reading advertisements, addressing envelopes, and determining the correct change in return for payment. Applied to current population statistics, a recent application of the APL standard of functional literacy indicates that 27 million Americans are functionally illiterate.

In 1986, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) created its own measurement of functional literacy, and suggested that 10 million adults were functionally illiterate. However, NAEP concluded that U.S. teenagers and adults have a serious problem with higher-order skills and critical thinking. For example, forty percent of Americans cannot use a road map; eighty percent cannot read a common bus schedule or figure out a tip in a restaurant.

Whether there are "only" 10 million or as many as 60 million people in the United States who are illiterate, the problem is still overwhelming and demands action.

These statistics demonstrate the difficulty of knowing how many illiterate Americans there are. Whether there are "only" 10 million or as many as 60 million people in the United States who are illiterate, the problem is still overwhelming and demands action.

The number of illiterate people is not likely to diminish soon. About four million people are enrolled in remedial programs across the country. Some of these learners will take several years to learn how to read; unfortunately, some will leave the programs before reaching their goals. Meanwhile, between 1.5 and 2.3 million illiterate Americans—new immigrants and school dropouts—are added to the pool each year.

Costs to society and to individuals

There is a more important question behind the numbers: What effect does illiteracy have on society and on individuals? For society, the costs of illiteracy are huge. The Business Council for Effective Literacy estimates that functional illiteracy costs the United States billions of dollars each year. Business and industry are hurt because of lost productivity, accidents in the workplace, lack of qualified workers, and loss of potential markets for products and services. The U.S. Government spends innumerable dollars making complicated procedures—from income tax forms to military manuals—more accessible to problem readers.

Though the costs to society are high, the costs to the individual non-reader are the greatest of all. While it is possible to lead a productive and dignified life when one is less literate, one's life can become marked by fear of exposure and a feeling of powerlessness and dependence. The ability to read and write gives individuals the power to make their own decisions by opening a new world of information. It enables individuals to become more informed voters and to participate more fully in a democratic society. Literate people have more freedom of self-determination, whether they wish to read to their children or get a job promotion.

The costs to the individual non-reader are the greatest of all.

Think of a world without the ability to use books and writing for pleasure and for progress, and living without the chance to explore new worlds in print. Imagine not meeting even the most simple, ordinary standards of the present world—if you were unable to write a check, apply for a job, or get a driver's license.

What has been done?

Illiteracy is not a new problem. There have always been illiterate Americans. (It is true that the definition of literacy has changed. A century ago, people were considered literate if they could sign their names. Today the skills required are more demanding.) Campaigns against illiteracy have been part of American schooling and public life for many years. Historians have looked at the importance and rate of literacy in colonial and nineteenth-century America, but there are no easy comparisons since literacy has not been measured in any uniform fashion.

The military has paid close attention to the literacy of its recruits since the nineteenth century, but its statistics only measure a certain segment of the population. The great influx of immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries increased national pressures for English literacy. For new Americans, the definition of literacy changed from simple reading and writing to include citizenship and other skills. President Hoover formed a national task force on adult illiteracy in the 1920s. The findings of Hoover's commission, however, had little impact on national policy in the wake of the Great Depression.

The issue of reading has been brought to the attention of the American public at many points since that time. In 1955, Rudolf Flesch published the best-selling *Why Johnny Can't Read.* While his conclusions were controversial, the book inspired a national debate over the teaching of reading and attracted attention to literacy issues, including adult illiteracy. In 1964, President Johnson launched the Adult Basic Education program (explained later in this chapter) as part of the Great Society reforms. The 1970s brought the Right to Read campaign, which again had little actual effect on national education policy but did provide some research on literacy and added publicity to literacy issues.

Along with federal funding for Adult Basic Education, state and local governments increasingly have dedicated efforts and funds to literacy. Private nonprofit literacy agencies such as Laubach Literacy International (est. 1955) and Literacy Volunteers of America (est. 1962) have provided basic literacy instruction for thousands of people (see Types of Literacy Programs, this chapter). These organizations, along with many other groups, match volunteer tutors with learners in one-to-one pairs, and provide training as well as materials for their volunteers.

The late 1970s and the 1980s have seen a new public awareness of illiteracy.

The late 1970s and the 1980s have seen a new public awareness of illiteracy. In 1982, the Coalition for Literacy was formed. The Coalition is made up of public and private literacy providers such as the American Library Association, the U.S. Department of Education, Literacy Volunteers of America, Laubach Literacy International, and others. The National Ad Council helped implement the Volunteer Against Illiteracy campaign, with the slogan "the only degree you need is a degree of caring."

In 1983, the Reagan administration issued a call for a "National Literacy Initiative." While there was no new federal legislation or funding provided, President Reagan stated four goals: to raise awareness of the problem; to stimulate private sector activity; to further private-public cooperation; and to generate community action. The Literacy Initiative has carried over into the Bush administration and is likely to continue.

In 1984, the College Work-Study Program began a pilot program using federal funds to pay work-study students performing literacy service work in the community. Another campus-community literacy partnership was created in 1989 through the Student Literacy Corps legislation. The bill calls for colleges and universities to create elective literacy courses for undergraduates in which the students tutor six hours a week in existing community literacy programs. Start-up money is provided to cover the cost of the course for two years.

As part of the federal agency ACTION, the Volunteers In Service To America program (VISTA) places VISTA Volunteers in community projects where they serve for at least one year in return for a small stipend. In 1985, special focus was given to literacy through the development of the VISTA Literacy Corps which concentrates on placing VISTA volunteers in local literacy programs.

In 1984, two television networks--PBS and ABC—created Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS), a joint media campaign to promote literacy. Through special programming, public service announcements, and events, PLUS has raised awareness of literacy issues across the country, promoted a national literacy hotline, and provided resources for local communities to build their own literacy networks. Other issues addressed by PLUS are at-risk youth, workplace literacy, and the problem of school dropouts.

How can higher education become involved?

Mobilize resources to work for a literate nation.

In colleges and universities across the country, there are thousands of potential literacy workers. They include students, faculty, administrators, and staff. Individuals can help in many ways. They can volunteer in community organizations as tutors or classroom aides; they can also recruit adult learners. Individuals and institutions can support legislation, give money and time to community agencies, and help raise awareness of illiteracy. Colleges and universities can provide invaluable human and physical resources to community and national efforts. Higher education can also provide a valuable commitment to literacy efforts through scholarly research and opportunities to earn academic credit for service. This book offers concrete suggestions for some of the many ways that colleges and universities can mobilize their resources to work for a literate nation.

Types of Learners and Programs

As one gets involved in the issue of literacy, it is helpful to know something about the various kinds of programs, services, and learners. Literacy is a complex issue, and, with the increased attention it has received in the last decade, it has generated new ideas, new resources, and new programs.

Types of learners

People enter literacy programs for a variety of reasons and from a wide range of backgrounds. Learners come from the United States, Southeast Asia, Africa, Europe, or South and Central America and may or may not speak English.

There is a distinction between Basic Reading (BR) learners and English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. Basic Reading projects address the needs of learners native to the United States or learners who have a speaking knowledge of English. ESL projects offer help to those people who do not speak and/or read English. In ESL programs, some learners may be literate and often well-educated in their own language, while others may lack basic literacy skills in both their native and second languages.

Learners may enter a program of their own volition, or they may be pressured into enrolling by friends, family, or relatives. A learner may welcome the support and encouragement of family and friends or may wish to keep his or her new learning quiet. The decision to try to learn to read again can be a difficult one. One man carried the New Jersey Literacy Hotline number in his wallet for over a year before having the courage to call for help. His story is not unique; it points to the enormous fears that can accompany a person's decision to work toward increased literacy skills.

The decision to try and learn to read again is a momentous one.

Learners may have dropped out of high school, or they may have been pushed out. "Push out" is a term used to describe people who remained in high school for four years and received a diploma but never succeeded in learning the basic skills of reading and/or writing. People who were pushed through and out of high school often fell behind at an early age and simply never caught up.

Questions arise when one hears that someone attended school for twelve years and graduated but cannot read. Learners tell stories of sickness, of frequent moves and new schools, of physical and sexual abuse, of learning disabilities that were undetected and undiagnosed, of home environments which did not encourage, and sometimes discouraged, reading. Often a learner's story is one of outside forces—socio-economic or racial discrimination that denied the person access to equal education. Any of these situations alone can be enough to prevent a child from learning or retaining information at school.

Learners' goals are as different as the learners themselves.

Learners' goals are as different as the learners themselves. Some people have a specific purpose in mind. This may be to receive their high school equivalency diploma, to obtain a driver's license, to read the Bible or other religious works, to read and fill out an application form, or to understand a want ad. Other goals can be more general: to help children with homework, to get a better job, to feel more confident, to be able to navigate the bus or highway system, or to be more active in the community. Some learners may not be able to read at all while others may have some reading skills. Therefore, while learning all the letters in the alphabet may be a short-term goal for one learner, it might be a long-term goal for another non-reader.

Adult learners must be in charge of their own learning.

Adult learners must be in charge of their own learning. You may or may not agree with the goals a learner has set for himself or herself. You may think a goal is too challenging or not challenging enough. When working with a learner, the teacher or tutor must accept the objective the learner has set and work to create a realistic period of time in which it can be accomplished.

Please do not make the mistake of thinking that because one person is more educated and more literate than another, the more literate person is somehow more intelligent. Think of the man in New York City who was a janitor in a large office building. Every morning he received written orders describing his tasks for the day. Every morning he would approach a different person, quietly explain that his glasses were at home and that he needed to hear his orders for the day. After listening once to the complex set of directions, instructions, and assignments, the janitor could memorize everything and go about his work. Day in and day out, this man needed energy, resourcefulness, and intelligence just to find out what his daily schedule was.

Another man, Peter, from the Northeast, ran his own business. He was able to get by for many years by relying on his partner and a small circle of friends who knew about his reading problem. If he were called upon to read something unexpectedly, he simply explained that his glasses were at home and had the other person read to him. He finally decided to enter a tutoring program when his fiancee learned of his inability to read.

Remember the importance of mutual respect.

Whether you are a tutor or working with learners in another context, remember the importance of mutual respect. As new learners begin to read, they will be facing a frustrating and challenging task. Your encouragement and support is crucial.

Types of literacy programs

Because there are different kinds of learners with vastly different needs and goals, there are different types of literacy programs that try to reach learners and offer them assistance, instruction, and encouragement.

Literacy programs are found in a variety of settings and use many different teaching strategies and methods. Some literacy programs are independent while others are affiliated with a church, a correctional facility, a community college, a library, or another institution.

Methods of instruction include one-to-one tutoring, small group instruction, classroom instruction, computer-assisted instruction (CAI), or a workbook series used in conjunction with a television program. Some programs use structured textbooks and programs of instruction while others rely on materials developed by tutors, teachers, and learners.

The following list describes the basic categories of programs existing today. *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts* contains a list of specific organizations with addresses, contact names, and phone numbers.

Programs in elementary and secondary schools

Many local elementary and secondary schools offer tutoring or remedial programs for children who are behind or "at risk" of dropping out. Some high schools have a minimum basic skills requirement for graduation. Tutors are helpful to those high school students who cannot pass a basic skills test. Other schools may offer ESL tutoring for children who do not speak English.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs

ABE programs focus on students sixteen years and older who, for whatever reason, did not finish high school. ABE programs are run by local boards of education with funds from the state and national departments of education. They offer classes in high school equivalency diploma preparation and basic skills. ABE programs are staffed by professional teachers. Some ABE programs use volunteers as classroom aides or as tutors for learners who need individualized help.

Private nonprofit volunteer literacy programs

A number of private nonprofit groups offer tutoring services to adult learners. Groups such as the Assault on Illiteracy Project (AOIP), Laubach Literacy Action (LLA), and Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) train and support volunteers who work one-to-one or in small groups with learners. The nonprofit literacy programs also develop and publish reading and learning materials which can be of great use to people involved in a tutoring project.

These organizations have national offices which provide tutor and management training, support, and encouragement for state and local affiliate groups. See *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts* for more information about how to reach their national and local offices.

Community-based organizations (CBOs)

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are described by the Association for Community Based Education (ACBE) as "programs set up to serve a given geographical area—usually disadvantaged. They are formed by their constituencies to meet specific needs that exist within the community. They often link education and community development activities." CBOs frequently use non-traditional methods of teaching and learning. They also tend to be "focused on helping learners meet objectives they themselves set in response to their own needs."

Community-based organizations vary widely in size, focus, and organizational structure. They share a commitment to education that is based in the community, which responds to the particular needs of the people it serves, and that is staffed and managed by people from the community. An example of a community-based organization is Navajo Community College, an institution of higher education chartered by the Navajo tribal government which assists members of the Navajo Nation. The Association for Community Based Education (ACBE), based in Washington, D.C., serves as a clearinghouse and network for CBOs.

Task forces, networks, and consortiums

Over the past decade, a number of literacy task forces and networks have been organized. While these groups are not in the business of providing direct services to learners, they share information and ideas, develop resources, evaluate and research literacy methods and advocate for literacy programs and support for adult learners. Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) has convened local PLUS task forces; the Literacy Network supports metropolitan programs; the Literacy and Technology Project provides information and technology consultants; and the Adult Literacy Initiative publishes the Adult Literacy and Learning (A.L.L.) Points Bulletin from the U.S. Department of Education. The Coalition for Literacy helps support the national literacy hotline. In 1989, the Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE) was formed to bring together college and university students, administrators and faculty who are committed to increased literacy in the United States. These and other networks are listed in *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts.*

STARTING A PROGRAM 3

Planning

There are three basic ways to get involved in literacy work: as an individual, as part of a group linked to an existing community literacy program, or as part of a group designing a campus-based tutoring program.

As an individual

Getting involved as an individual serving in an existing community literacy project is straightforward and direct. Such involvement makes a lot of sense if you have a limited amount of time to give. In part three of this section, there are some suggestions about how to identify programs in the community with which you can work. In *Chapter 5: Taking Action*, you will find a number of ideas about what kinds of individual services you can provide to a local literacy program.

As a group

If you are interested in working as part of a group that has a strong and continuous relationship with local literacy groups, you will have to spend more time organizing the project than if you were working as an individual. The results can be both satisfying and beneficial to you, the institution you represent, the local literacy program and, ultimately, the learners. Organizations demand your energy and time because they are based on the commitment and hard work of a few individuals.

One of the most positive results of organizing a group effort is the development of a community of people at your institution who are committed to literacy. People from all parts of the college or university community (students, faculty, staff, and administrators), as well as local community people, are brought together to work with one another in a new way.

The remaining part of this section as well as *Chapter 4: Working with...* will be helpful to you as you structure a literacy project. *Chapter 5: Taking Action* and *Chapter 10: Program Profiles* provide program ideas and examples of existing campus/community literacy projects. A campus/community literacy project is particularly effective because it establishes a lasting tie between the institution and the community. This link can bring about sustained institutional change which benefits the community and the college or university. Both

Establish a lasting tie between the institution and the community.

communities can learn from each other and can benefit from a positive, cooperative relationship.

Do not duplicate the services that already exist in the community.

It is possible that literacy programs do not exist in your community. It is also possible that people within the college or university community may have literacy needs themselves. In this kind of situation, you may be interested in setting up a campus-based, independent literacy project. This is a worthwhile but difficult task and not one to be undertaken lightly.

Avoid reinventing the wheel. You do not want to duplicate services that already exist in the community. Make every effort you can to find an existing literacy project in the community or look into another social service or human service agency that may wish to provide literacy services to its clients. If indeed there are no literacy groups or if you wish to help people who are members of the college or university community, then forge ahead. All the sections in this book will be helpful to you. *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts* will be particularly useful as you research methods of tutoring, training, supervising, and evaluating.

Questions and Answers

Getting involved in the issue of literacy or any other kind of social service project is exciting and challenging. Part of the challenge comes from discovering the complexity of the literacy issue and struggling to answer some of the questions that people unfamiliar with the issue may ask.

Questions college and university community members ask

Q. No one on campus seems to know anything about the issue of literacy. How can people be made aware of the problem?

A. It is important to increase knowledge about literacy in general and the needs of the community in particular. Awareness meetings can be held in central academic buildings on campus as well as dormitories, cafeterias, and libraries. *Chapter 7: Recruiting and Promotion* contains suggestions on how to draw attention to literacy and to efforts being made on campus to involve people in the issue.

Q. There are a few literacy programs in the community but none of them are interested in working with college or university volunteers. What should be done?

A. The first step is to find out why the local programs are reluctant to work with college or university people. It may be the result of a bad experience in the past with another campus group. If so, acknowledge that the programs may have a legitimate concern, but point out that it should not preclude the local programs from ever working with campus groups again. Meet with the program directors and be specific about what can and cannot be accomplished by the volunteers who are available on campus. Make sure not to promise more than can be delivered. It might make sense to start out with a one-time project that gets people from your institution involved and helps establish trust between the campus group and the local literacy agency. A used book sale or another fundraising event might be a good place to begin.

Establish trust between the campus group and the local literacy agency.

It is possible that the local literacy program simply does not use large numbers of volunteers. In that case, discuss the possibility of a project involving work-study students or professors who act as consultants to the program. See *Chapter 5: Taking Action* for a variety of ideas on how college and university people can contribute to a literacy program in addition to the traditional role of a volunteer tutor.

If there are no local literacy programs, look to social service agencies that might consider adding a tutoring component to their services. These include legal clinics, programs for young mothers who may have had to drop out of school, or local tenant cooperatives. Another alternative is to work through the local school system. Tutoring children and teenagers is all part of increasing literacy in the community.

Q. The tutoring and training sites are off campus. How can the programs be made more accessible?

A. Look into public transportation routes—buses or subways. Make sure you have maps available with the routes marked on them and a phone number to call in case a volunteer gets lost. Encourage people to travel together. There is also the possibility of using university vans and cars. Another option is to arrange for learners and tutors to meet in campus classrooms, libraries, or administrative buildings.

Questions students may ask

Q. I'm just an undergraduate. What skills do I have that can be helpful to a literacy program?

A. You can read and write. Those skills are absolutely vital and should not be underestimated. Since you are student, you have a sensitivity about what it is like to be a learner. You share some of the same anxieties and excitements as an adult or teenage new reader.

If the literacy program is not in need of tutors, think of the other skills you possess. What did you put on your college application? High school newspaper? Help develop a tutor/learner newsletter. Spanish club? Work at orientation to enable Spanish-speaking learners to communicate and get their questions answered. Have you ever done any baby-sitting? Help organize a child care program for the children of adult learners.

If you are older than the average student, there are a number of suggestions in *Chapter 5: Taking Action* in the section on "Program ideas for non-traditional students."

Q. I'm from out of town. I don't know anything about the local community. How can I volunteer if I don't know my way around?

A. If your campus has a community service organization, the coordinators can link you up with local contacts. Look in the college or university directory and find some students who are from the local community. They are the experts on what the community is like. The first time you venture into town to volunteer, go with two or three other people. This helps make you feel less nervous.

Q. I don't have time to volunteer. What can I do if I have a full load of classes and other commitments?

A. You have many choices. Integrate community service work into coursework. See *Chapter 6: Literacy and Learning* for suggestions. Arrange to have a work-study job placement in a community agency. *Chapter 10: Program Profiles* contains examples of campus/community literacy projects that use work-study students. A final option is to get involved in one-time or short-term projects such as volunteering at a literacy conference, designing a brochure, or organizing a weekend fundraising drive.

Questions faculty, staff, and administrators may ask

Q. Literacy work and basic education is removed from higher education. Why should a college or university be involved in literacy?

Literacy and learning are part of education.

A. Literacy and learning are part of education. Research on the topic of literacy, adult education, or bilingual education can engage faculty and can expand the body of scholarship in those fields. Providing assistance to the community promotes good relations and good faith between the institution and local neighborhoods. In *Chapter 10:* Brevard Community College, University of Pennsylvania, and Yale University are among the programs which involve faculty, staff, and administrators in literacy work. Michael Holzman's article "Teaching is Remembering" in *Chapter 11: Issues* discusses how, as a faculty member, he went about setting up a literacy program at the University of Southern California.

Q. I have no expertise in education or public policy. What can I contribute to a literacy project?

A. As a person who reads and writes, you can contribute a great deal to a literacy project by serving as a volunteer tutor. As an administrator or faculty member, you can encourage students and colleagues to participate in literacy projects. "Program Ideas for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators" in *Chapter 5: Taking Action* provides other options for involvement.

Q. I have a limited amount of time on my hands. How can I find the time to work on this issue?

A. It is possible to get release time for community service work. Another idea is to tie service for a literacy project to other ongoing research, such as an outreach project which links the campus to the community. Consider short-term involvement such as giving a speech in support of literacy, inviting local literacy workers and learners to speak as guest lecturers, organizing a literacy awareness week, sponsoring a student-run literacy project, or serving as a consultant to a local program.

Questions local literacy service providers may ask

Q. We worked with a local college two years ago and the volunteers could never fit into our time schedule for training and tutoring. Why will this time be any different?

A. Make the expectations for time commitments clear in recruiting efforts. Many students on campus commit to Big Brother/Big Sister programs for an entire year. There is no reason that the same type of match cannot be arranged for literacy programs. Training schedules are not set so firmly in stone that some modification cannot be made. It is also possible to train a small group of people from a college or university to serve as an on-campus corps of tutor trainers. Hiring work-study students to tutor learners or working with faculty to incorporate tutoring into coursework are ways to ensure commitment.

Q. Students on campus lack skills and maturity. What can they provide to a literacy program?

A. Students, young and old, have energy, excitement, and creativity. They have not learned that it cannot be done. Students also have plenty of concrete skills that can be of service to a local literacy program. Even if a program uses only professional instructors to work with learners, there are plenty of other roles for students. These include such varied tasks as helping with public relations, recruiting, designing posters, caring for children of learners, doing research on the history of literacy, or helping with bulk mailings. *Chapter 5: Taking Action* is full of a range of ideas for student involvement.

Q. Our program deals exclusively with adult learners. Most university students are young. How can the age barrier be overcome?

A. In a match between a student and an adult learner, the learner can benefit from being in a position to teach the college or university student about life experiences, working experiences, or family life. In addition, students have fewer defenses built up about the right or wrong way to do something and, therefore, can be more receptive to using a variety of teaching techniques and alternative learning materials with learners.

Students have not yet learned that it cannot be done.

Another point to keep in mind is that graduate students and a growing number of undergraduates are older than the traditional 18-24 years. This pool of students can be recruited to work with adult learners. *Chapter 5: Taking Action* includes a section on program ideas for non-traditional undergraduates.

Q. We work with English as a Second Language students. How can the language and cultural barriers be overcome?

A. Making contact with ethnic and cultural groups as well as foreign language departments on campus can give you access to students and faculty with a knowledge of languages other than English. By providing adequate orientation to the literacy workers and the learners who will be working together, a lot of misconceptions about cultural differences can be cleared up at the beginning of a program. Creating support groups for the workers and learners is a way to ensure that problems can be talked about and addressed before they become serious.

While the questions asked above are not the only ones that need to be answered when beginning a literacy project, they provide an overview of some of the most common issues.

The remainder of this book provides you with ideas and advice which will enable you to address these and other concerns.

The First Steps

Organizations grow out of the commitment and hard work of a few individuals. A program may eventually involve large numbers of people, but establishing a framework is a task often accomplished by a small group. As you take the first steps, you may be working completely alone or with the help of only two or three people. That is an effective way to operate at the beginning. A small group can get a great deal accomplished and can lay a solid groundwork so the organization is ready when large numbers of people are interested in joining you.

As you plan involvement in literacy work, focus on the following tasks:

Identifying existing literacy efforts

The first thing you will need to discover is what is going on already. Find out what kinds of literacy services are available and for whom they are structured. Identify which programs use volunteers (as tutors/teachers' aides or in other roles) and those which might welcome work-study students as paid staff people, or faculty and administrators as consultants.

Look both on campus and in the surrounding community.

On campus

Is there a *community service organization* on campus which links the campus to the community? Does it offer tutoring projects or other literacy services? Does it have a project at a women's shelter, a homeless shelter, a food bank, or other places where the people served might also need help with literacy skills.

At Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, the campus community service program includes several kinds of literacy projects. At the Adult Learning Center in Middletown, students work with learners through an ABE program. Literacy Volunteers of Greater Middletown matches students with adult learners from the local community. The tutor/learner pairs meet in the local library for their weekly lessons. In a program linked directly to Wesleyan, a community tutorial for lower income minority and Hispanic children is organized and run out of a building on the campus. Elementary students meet on a weekly basis with Wesleyan undergraduates.

Does your university or college have a *Department or College of Education, Social Work, Public Policy or Urban Studies*? These departments or any other related departments may have literacy projects in place. There may be research being done on literacy, Adult Basic Education, ESL or Basic Skills. Ask at the various department offices about faculty members who might be interested or who might be knowledgeable about the issue of literacy. Remember, faculty members are also members of the local community and may therefore have strong ties to existing community projects.

At Temple University in Pennsylvania, the Institute on Aging's Center for Intergenerational Learning sponsors Project LEIF (Learning English through Intergenerational Friendship). The program matches student volunteers with elderly refugees to tutor English as a Second Language. The older refugees benefit from the instruction and companionship while the tutors gain insight into a new culture. Through piloting and testing innovative projects such as LEIF, Temple's Institute on Aging is able to further its goal of reducing age segregation and intergenerational tension.

Does the personnel department of the college or university have something like a campus *employee improvement project?* This type of program offers classes to people who work on the support staff at the campus in everything from college level work to basic skills or ESL. Talk to the managers of this program to see if you can get involved.

Duke University in North Carolina sponsors the Duke Read Program which pairs students with Duke employees in need of tutoring. The Read program is part of Duke's Community Service Network (CSN). Interested students are recruited through newspaper articles, general DUVS recruiting drives and word of mouth. Working with the Durham County Literacy Council, the students receive training in the Laubach method. Once tutors and learners are matched by a student project head from CSN, they arrange to meet once a week in employee lounges, offices or other sites convenient for the learners. Learners are drawn from the maintenance, hospital services and physical plant divisions at Duke University. The division heads are responsible for making workers aware of the availability of the free tutoring services. In addition to individual tutorials with Duke students, a paid professional teacher is on duty every week for learners who need to work on GED preparation. The learners meet for two hours, one of which is paid released time and the other hour comes out of the employee's own time.

Does your institution provide *remedial classes* and *help for students at the college or university* who may have reading or writing problems themselves? There is a possibility that literacy classes are already part of the curriculum.

In Iowa, North Carolina, Oregon, Washington, and Wisconsin, community colleges are the main source for providing basic skills instruction to adults. In other states, the community colleges play a significant role in providing ABE classes. The ABE programs in California and Florida work with over one million adults.

In the community

Take a careful look at what kinds of literacy programs already exist in the community. You can collect information about what is out there by contacting any or all of the following sources.

Regional, statewide or citywide literacy task forces. There may be a clearinghouse or coalition which has already taken an inventory of existing programs in your area. Information about these types of groups should be listed at city hall or at the state house. The local library is always a good source of contacts and phone numbers if the other sources cannot help you.

Large-scale national volunteer literacy programs. They might have a state office or local affiliate in your area (see *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts*).

Local library and the local and state departments of education. These institutions often oversee literacy programs or have listings of independent projects.

County jail or other correctional facilities. There may be tutoring projects or ABE programs for inmates.

Social service agencies and nonprofit organizations. These institutions frequently provide services to single mothers with dependent children, homeless or hungry people, battered women, high school drop-outs, and the elderly. Human service programs sometimes have a literacy component or may consider adding one.

Identify people from the community who would be interested in being part of a planning group.

Once you have found the groups or programs in your area which provide literacy services, you will want to identify people from the programs who would be interested in being part of a planning group. Give these agencies a call, tell them who you are and that you are starting to plan a literacy project. Find out what they are doing and what kinds of projects would complement and/or enhance (not duplicate) services the existing programs currently provide. The advice of people already "in the business" is crucial and can take many forms. Some people may just talk to you over the phone while others may wish to participate in program planning, development, and implementation.

If the local literacy people seem reluctant at first or simply uninterested in working with you, do not abandon the effort to work with them. Keep in touch with them, call them once a semester or solicit their advice. They may come around eventually. They may be waiting to see how your program takes shape and what the depth of your institution's commitment is.

Work in partnership with the community, not separate from it.

Remember, you want to work in partnership with the community, not separate from it. Do not be alarmed if you get some initial negative response from the community. Local literacy efforts tend to be overburdened, underfunded and understaffed. Some local literacy groups may have had a bad experience with a college group in the past. Work to overcome a negative impression, for in the long run, such groups are the best source of information and advice for the literacy efforts you want to launch on campus. They also have experience in the areas of training, placing and supporting volunteers as well as knowledge about methods of recruiting and matching literacy clients. See *Chapter 4: Working with...* for more advice about developing relationships with individuals and organizations in the community.

If there is no current literacy effort in your area, look to related social service agencies. These are places where the clients may be in need of literacy assistance even though they have entered the program to get help with another problem. Local churches and other religious groups are also a good source of information about literacy efforts or community agencies or projects which may benefit from a literacy program.

In Philadelphia, a shelter, run by the Committee for Dignity and Fairness for the Homeless, sponsors a number of programs including an in-house literacy project, a GED project and an employee advocacy project. Students from Bryn Mawr and Haverford colleges help out in the employment project by assisting learners when they set goals, write resumes and organize their job searches. By advertising through campus mailings and word of mouth, about ten students were recruited to work at the shelter during the school year. In 1987, six students remained in Philadelphia over the summer to continue their work.

Identifying a core group of workers and supporters

Begin to recruit a core group of three or four workers and supporters who want to help you plan and follow through with a campus literacy effort. Work towards a mix of student, faculty, administrative, and community representatives. Include first-year students who will have a full four years to carry on the project. If your core group is balanced from the start, then your literacy efforts will reflect that balance and will appeal to a broader range of people. However, the most important characteristics in the initial stages of a project are a commitment to literacy and the desire to get things going. Work for balance and equal representation, but concentrate on people who are dedicated and willing to put in time.

Setting objectives

Once a core group is in place, it is appropriate to set preliminary tasks and objectives. It is important to do some preparatory work prior to any large-scale recruiting efforts. You need the input of a group of people for any major decisions, but you should begin the process of formulating a plan. You can work quickly at this stage. Take advantage of your enthusiasm, energy, and momentum. Set a starting date to work from and outline some tasks. Initial objectives might look like this:

☐ In two weeks from the starting date, recruit a core group of five to eight people whose members are willing to work hard and represent different groups within the campus and the local communities.

☐ In two weeks from the starting date, set a time, date and place for your first large-scale planning meeting.

☐ In two weeks from the starting date, send letters and information about the first meeting to twenty-five people from the campus and local community.

☐ In three weeks from the starting date, develop a rough list of literacy programs that would welcome help from the campus community.

The First Meeting

In reality, you and whatever small core group you have been working with will have had meetings prior to this "first meeting." This one- to two-hour meeting will open up the literacy project to more people from the college or university and local communities. It is time to create a broader base for the literacy project and involve the energy and ideas of a larger group.

Some general advice about meetings

Boring meetings which get nothing accomplished can undermine any group's effectiveness regardless of the urgency of the issue or the level of enthusiasm for a project.

☐ Keep to the agreed upon time limit.

☐ Avoid talking at or lecturing the group. Whenever possible, have a discussion and let everyone have a voice.

☐ Give people something to do right away. If people do not feel needed, they will not feel any urgency to get involved. Delegate tasks that are well-defined.

☐ Follow up, follow up, follow up! Keep in contact with people by phone or by mail.

☐ Do not get nervous about numbers. If fewer people show up than you expected, think of them as a small, fervent band of enthusiasts. If more people than you expected show up, delegate or divide the group into small working teams that can get a lot accomplished. Whatever happens, do not panic.

Who should be at the first meeting?

Students

Try for a mixture of people. Identify individual students, student leaders, or groups of students from all over campus. Examples include student service organizations, education majors, international student associations, literary clubs, computer clubs, ethnic and cultural student associations, or student government.

Faculty members

Faculty may want to volunteer in projects themselves or serve as sponsors of literacy courses or research. Send out the word through departmental bulletins and newsletters or through personal visits. The School of Education, Urban Studies, or Social Work may be involved in the literacy issue, but do not limit your appeal to these obvious departments. You might also try the English Department, School of Journalism, Sociology Department, or Foreign Language Department.

Administrators and staff

Administrators and staff members may want to get involved as volunteers. In addition to recruiting this group as volunteers, get the official support of the administration whenever possible. A simple endorsement in the form of an open letter to the community from the president or a dean can help you gain access to college or university resources and may open some doors in the community. Remember that the administration has a vested interest in the quality of student life, the commitment of students to the life of the community, and the quality of the institution's civic involvement.

Literacy service providers / community members

Invite local literacy workers to attend the meeting. They can take an active role at the meeting when it comes time to describe the types of literacy services already available in the community. As mentioned before, they know the ropes and have a feel for the needs of the community. Keep in mind that the real community leaders are sometimes not the obvious people. For instance, the person who runs a local day care program is often aware of parents who are struggling with literacy problems. Talk to someone who knows the community well, particularly the areas where there are real literacy needs.

Learners

If there are associations of adult learners or support groups for other people who are in need of literacy services, make an effort to include them. The learners are the people you are trying to reach, and if they participate in the planning of a literacy campaign, your efforts will be that much more successful.

How to get people to the meeting

Set a firm time, date, and place for the meeting. Make it convenient and accessible to campus and community members. An early dinner on a weeknight or Sunday evening or a meeting over a long lunch is a good time, and two hours is a reasonable length for the meeting.

Write a letter of introduction, explanation, and information to the people you would like to have at the meeting. If possible, include a phone number in the letter so people can call if they have questions or need clarification.

☐ For the community people to whom you send the letter, include a simple map of your campus and information about where to park or what the best public transportation routes are.

☐ If you can get a few other people to sign the letter with you, so much the better. This is an indication that the organization of this project is spread among a variety of individuals and groups.

☐ Keep a copy of the mailing list so people who are unable to attend the meeting can be sent information and be kept abreast of developments.

Follow up the letter with phone calls to see who is planning to attend the meeting. Keep a list of those who cannot be there but would like to know about future meetings and progress.

What is on the agenda?

You will want to include *an explanation of the literacy problem* in your area. Draw attention to the projects and programs that the core group has identified which currently provide literacy services. You may want to have a few brochures or handouts to supplement this information. See if you can arrange for someone from a local literacy program to contribute to this presentation. It is a simple way to invite community involvement from the very beginning.

After the introduction, you will want to have *a discussion of how the group wants to get involved.* Ask questions of the group as a whole. If it is a large gathering, you can split into small groups to discuss the questions and then regroup later.

Start a discussion of how the group wants to get involved.

Do not feel you have to determine the answers to all these questions at once. The large group may need to divide into smaller working units after the meeting to investigate and assess both the needs of the community and those of the local literacy programs. However, the first meeting is the time to raise issues and begin to think about them.

The questions that need to be addressed fall into a few basic categories. The first concern is the needs of the local community. Are there gaps in the current literacy efforts in the community? Issues to be addressed include:

Who is in need of literacy services in the community?

Basic Reading learners
English as a Second Language learners

Adult learners
At-risk youth
Teenagers, high school drop-outs
Prison inmates
Mentally disabled learners
Senior citizens
Refugees
Immigrants
Migrant workers

Which literacy efforts in the community are in need of assistance?

Are there literacy programs which, because of their location, the type of learner they serve or their current funding or staff level, are in great need of assistance? Are there literacy programs in the community that do not utilize volunteers or people from outside the local community?

What kinds of roles can college or university community members play?

Direct services to learners

- Work as one-to-one tutors
- Work as classroom aides in an ABE or Basic Skills program
- Work as small group tutors/facilitators
- Organize support groups for the learners
- Recruit learners and spread the word about available services
- Organize and run a conversation group for ESL learners
- Plan an oral history project about the local community and interview learners and other community people about their experiences
- Help with the initial registration of learners: testing/screening/orientation
- Transport learners to and from tutoring or classroom sites
- Develop and oversee a letter writing exchange to help develop learners' writing skills
- Develop training programs on topics such as job hunting or stress management
- Develop voter education and registration projects
- Read low-level, high interest books onto cassette tapes for learners

Services to a literacy project

- Help with public relations
- Recruit volunteers and learners
- Assist office and clerical staff
- Raise money
- Increase community outreach and awareness projects
- Develop materials and curriculum
- Organize conferences and meetings
- Coordinate recognition ceremonies for staff, volunteers or learners
- Train tutors
- Develop in-service training programs for tutors, teachers, and staff on such issues as learning disabilities, reading comprehension or computer management of information
- Find new tutoring or training sites
- Conduct research on such topics as evaluation of learner progress, the history of literacy, or literacy policy

What next?

After giving participants some time to think in a large group or talk in small groups, have everyone discuss the initial responses to the questions. It is helpful to have a blackboard and chalk or some newsprint and markers to record the ideas of the group.

Identify some tasks that need to be accomplished before your next meeting. Beginning objectives may be to:

☐ Develop a comprehensive list of all literacy service providers in the community along with a list of social service agencies which have a literacy component in addition to their main services.

☐ Talk to local literacy providers and develop a "wish list" of ways the campus community could be of service to the program. If possible, try to get specific job descriptions.

☐ Create a tentative list of the resources (human, physical and financial) of your institution. Think of ways the institution as a whole can be a part of a literacy project.

☐ Compile a list of names, phone numbers and addresses of everyone at the organizational meeting.

☐ Compile a transportation list of bus, subway, bicycle, and pedestrian routes to local literacy office sites. Make an additional list of tutoring and/or classroom sites if they are separate from the program offices.

There may be other tasks you think of that need to be accomplished, but this is a good list from which to start. Make sure that you assign these tasks to individuals or small groups before the group disperses.

The conclusion of the meeting

End on a positive note. Set the time, date and place for the next meeting. Everyone should leave a name, number and address so you can follow up. Ask people to bring a friend to the next meeting and to discuss the literacy project with others. Encourage enthusiasm in the planning and execution of the objectives the group has set.

Looking ahead

As the plans for a literacy project develop, it is important to think about structural issues. How is the program going to work?

☐ Will the group provide direct services to learners, will the group provide services to the staff of local literacy programs, or both?

☐ Where are people going to work—on campus, off campus?

☐ Who will have primary responsibility for placing the campus literacy workers?

☐ Who will have primary responsibility for training them?

☐ Will the program connect with one or two literacy programs or more?

☐ Who will have the responsibility of training and supervising the workers?

☐ Who will evaluate the program?

Form partnerships with existing literacy programs in the community.

These are questions to think about and to address in future meetings. There is no perfect way to structure a program. Different campuses and different communities will dictate what is best for their area. However, it is important to form partnerships with existing literacy programs in the community. Even if the project you develop is on campus, make sure that contact has been made to keep people in the community informed of your activities.

WORKING WITH...

4

Working with ...

The purpose of this chapter is to give you advice about how to work with various groups as you structure a literacy project. You will be encountering learners, community literacy program staff and volunteers, as well as representatives from the community at large. Contacts may range from municipal and county officials to human services agency personnel, from local librarians to businesspeople.

Even if the literacy program you are working on is independent and based on campus, you are connected to the local community.

Learners

Literacy is learning. Literacy is reaching people who have difficulty reading and enabling them to become independent readers, people who can get access to information that can provide them with greater freedom. The literacy project you organize may or may not involve direct services such as tutoring or teaching. You may be providing services to the community literacy program itself. However, working with new readers is the basis of any literacy project, so you can expect to have some contact with learners.

Issues of awareness and sensitivity should be confronted and addressed as soon as one begins to work with people who are learning to read. *Some things to keep in mind:*

☐ Every person has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

☐ Less educated does not equal less intelligent. This point has been made before, but it bears repeating. The life experiences of a person who has trouble reading and yet has functioned, often with a high degree of success in the so-called "literate world," should not be taken lightly.

Less educated does not equal less intelligent.

☐ The decision to ask for help takes great courage. There are stigmas that accompany illiteracy. This is particularly true for people who grew up in the United States with access to "free and equal" education and who are unable to read. Many less literate people struggle to overcome fear, embarrassment, and shame. An adult learner from Chicago who addressed the 24th Annual Literacy Volunteers of America conference put it this way: "There are those of us who are ready to become visible, there are others who wish to remain invisible." It is important to recognize and respect this distinction.

There are problems or commitments that can slow the process of learning.

☐ Learners often have important problems or commitments that inhibit or slow the process of learning. A child's illness, job conflicts, or family obligations can make it difficult for people to maintain continuity of learning. This is a fact of life in adult education for which you should be prepared.

Some barriers to learning are obvious. For instance, if you are involved in a tutoring project which meets in the evening, keep in mind that sheer physical exhaustion may prevent a learner from giving you his or her undivided attention. Make sure both you and the learner have had a chance to eat something before you start work. Energy is important.

Other barriers to learning can be more serious. A woman learner was beaten by her boyfriend who felt threatened by her developing skills as a reader. The young man often followed her to tutoring meetings and argued with her and the tutor about his anxieties and anger. In another instance, the wife of a learner became upset when her husband, who was matched with a female tutor, began to receive phone calls from a strange woman. The tutor, respecting the husband's desire to keep his new learning a secret, was unable to explain herself or the reason for her calls.

Sometimes you may be aware of these kinds of problems. At other times, a learner may be reluctant to let you know about them. Always be aware that major conflicts and pressures compete for a learner's time and attention.

☐ Learners are anxious to acquire skills quickly. When one has waited, sometimes for years, to come forward and appeal for assistance, there is a tendency to want to learn everything as quickly as possible. Do not waste this person's time by concentrating on subjects or materials that are of interest to you or that you feel are appropriate. Respect the learner's goals and his or her wishes. At the same time, help learners recognize that reading is not a skill that can be acquired overnight. It takes time and hard work for both tutors and learners.

Roles for learners

Some learners participate in a literacy project, reach their goals, and leave. Others may wish to become active in the organization and management of a literacy program.

Learners speak to the issue and its human costs with a conviction that others can never have.

Learners are the best and most compelling advocates for any literacy program. They can speak to the issue and its human costs with a conviction that others can never have. For those learners who are comfortable being visible, it benefits you, the program, and the learners if you call upon their assistance and leadership. More and more literacy programs are encouraging and developing ways that learners can have a voice in all aspects of the program, from public relations to the development of materials.

Some ways that learners have become involved include:

☐ *Public relations.* Public speaking, radio and television interviews, public service announcements, and interviews with local newspapers are all ways that learners can participate in the area of public relations. After a group of learners appeared on ABC News Nightline on April 10, 1987, the National Coalition for Literacy had to hire additional staff to deal with the volume of calls on the National Literacy Hotline. The stories that the learners told were simple, direct, and powerful.

☐ *Fundraising.* At a New York City literacy program, learners sometimes accompany staff or board members during visits to potential donors.

☐ *Orientation programs.* For programs that have tutor or learner orientation, a presentation by a learner is an effective way to welcome people, give them an overview of the program, and answer questions about literacy. Any role-playing exercises that take place during orientation can also involve the learners who are currently in the program.

☐ *Recruiting.* Learners from local neighborhoods and communities can talk to friends and help the local literacy program establish credibility in communities where the need is greatest.

☐ *Development of learning materials.* Learners can help when choosing textbooks and workbooks. They can also develop stories, poems or songs for other people to read.

Learners can serve as volunteers in a program, as paid staff, or members of the board. In Maine, the Literacy Volunteers organization had a learner on the board of directors. Through the federal program Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA), many learners have become paid staff members at local literacy groups.

Learner involvement evolves over time.

Learner involvement evolves over time and may not be something that is part of a program right from the start. It is vital to gain the trust of the learners before one begins to make demands upon them, particularly when those demands mean that the learner must expose himself or herself in some way. If the initiative for involvement comes from the learners themselves, so much the better. If not, there are ways to develop interest and involvement. One way to start is through learner support groups.

Learner support groups are informal gatherings held on a monthly or weekly basis. Topics of discussion include: coping with job pressures, fear, anxiety, health care, or neighborhood development. An outside person can lead the discussion or it can be run by the learners themselves. Allow the support group to get established and then raise the idea of further involvement. Let the group members discuss it on their own and make recommendations to you based on their ideas and discussions. This way the learners have involvement and control from the start.

A word of caution before one approaches learners and asks them to increase their involvement. Be sure that your enthusiasm and excitement about an idea does not overwhelm the learner and result in coercion. Advance an idea, give the person or group you are talking to plenty of time to think about it, and make sure they feel comfortable taking on a new role in the program.

Another concern is that many adult learners have tried and failed a number times. The system offered hope, only to withdraw support or not follow through. If you plan to approach learners for involvement, be willing to follow through and make sure their involvement has meaning.

If a learner or a group of learners do something out of a sense of obligation and not out of a real desire to get involved, they can end up getting used.

Community literacy programs

When asked in the fall of 1986 about getting college and university people involved in literacy work, the program director of a county-wide tutoring project burst out laughing. She became very serious, however, when she described a phone call she received late one fall semester. A student from a neighboring university had called and asked if he could "please have an illiterate for a few weeks." The professor of a class he was taking had made tutoring a requirement for the course. The faculty member had done this without making contact with the local literacy groups. Although this story is an extreme example, it is true and it reflects a concern that many literacy service providers have when they talk about working with colleges and universities.

There is a critical need for communication, understanding and trust.

There is a critical need for communication, understanding, and trust.

As you develop relationships with the community think about:

☐ Relationships with agencies and individuals take time to develop and may change. Do not get discouraged if the initial response to your program or your ideas is not overwhelmingly positive. Friendships and partnerships do not form overnight. If you are beginning a new literacy project, remember that your program is new, and you may have to prove your good intentions.

☐ Do not give in to the "savior of the community" complex. If you present yourself to the local literacy programs as the great hope, salvation, and solution to all literacy problems, you may well fall on your face. You will almost certainly alienate the people with whom you are trying to work.

☐ Community literacy agencies are not necessarily perfect. However, many people who work in local literacy projects have been doing so for years, sometimes decades. It is important to respect their expertise and advice.

Other community organizations and agencies

The problem of literacy is not one that stands alone.

The problem of literacy is not one that stands alone. It is often linked to other issues and concerns. It is helpful to establish ties with community agencies that have contact with people who might benefit from tutoring or teaching services. Ongoing relationships with human service agencies are also important if a program needs to refer a learner for assistance or advice. You can establish contact with agencies such as:

Health and Human Services
Local and/or state branch of the Division on Aging
Youth and Family Services
Women's shelters and crisis centers
Homeless shelters
Food banks
Tenant organizations and neighborhood coalitions

A second group of community agencies to communicate with consists of organizations which can provide assistance and support to a literacy project. These groups can be a source of tutoring sites, additional tutors, reading and teaching materials, or contributions. They are:

Local religious organizations
Civic clubs
Community education programs
Local libraries
Neighborhood groups
Tenant associations
Ethnic and cultural associations

Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) has compiled a list of national organizations ranging from the Printing Industries of America, Inc. to the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the U.S. The groups on the list have signed up in support of the efforts of PLUS to increase literacy in the U.S. You can obtain a copy of the list by writing or calling PLUS (see *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts*). Contact the local chapters or branches of the national groups and see what they are doing to support local literacy efforts. Be prepared with a list of suggestions if they have not yet gotten involved.

TAKING ACTION 5

Introduction

Appeal to the strengths of various members of the campus community.

Getting involved in literacy efforts means working with a variety of different groups and individuals. Any literacy project organized on campus should attempt to include people from the various segments of the university or college community. Likewise, there are several places to look in the local community when organizing a literacy effort. Remember that all the groups and individuals you work with will have different expectations and interests. Be flexible and open-minded when planning projects.

This chapter gives you ideas about how to appeal to the interests and strengths of the various members of the campus community while at the same time meeting the needs of community literacy programs.

Program Ideas for Everyone

The program summaries in this section will give you ideas about the variety of ways to get involved in local literacy efforts. Some of these programs are already in place and will mention a particular college or university program. Other projects are ideas suggested by literacy service providers or campus community members that might work at your institution.

Tutoring

The purpose of literacy programs is to help people learn. A number of literacy programs use volunteer tutors to help adult learners. Adult Basic Education programs and others that employ professional teachers often use volunteers as teachers' aides. Working directly with beginning readers is an exciting and challenging task.

☐ *Tutors.* A number of private, non-profit literacy programs are based on the philosophy that if a person can read he or she can be trained to teach someone else to read.

At Columbia University in New York, graduate students in the School of Law have developed a tutoring program. A local junior high school refers learners who are bright but seem to be at risk of dropping out. Each week, roughly thirty learners travel by public transportation to Columbia and meet with their tutors in university classrooms. Tutors and learners are matched one-to-one and concentrate on subjects the learner is having trouble with in school or on homework assignments. Tutors are recruited through posters, campus mail, and word of mouth. The recruiting and matching are organized by student volunteers who also double as tutors. Most tutors commit to a semester of working with a learner.

☐ *Teachers' aides.* Professional teachers who work in ABE classes are often in need of classroom aides. There is also a demand for trained volunteers to work individually with students who are falling behind in class or who need additional help with their assignments.

☐ *Small group tutoring.* Some literacy programs encourage learners to work in small groups or learning circles. A trained volunteer serves as a facilitator for the group — answering questions, working on assignments and helping the group whenever needed.

Testing / placement of learners

Once a learner has made the decision to enter a literacy program, it is important to assess that person's academic strengths and weaknesses so he or she can receive the appropriate level of instruction. Testing and placement procedures vary from program to program. Some agencies may have a complicated set of written or oral tests, some projects may simply have a learner read a list of words, other programs may contact a learner by phone and ask informal questions about the person's past learning experiences and current goals. Initial testing and assessment is important. Periodic follow-up can also be helpful. Most literacy programs have a system, formal or informal, to monitor the progress of learners and their teachers or tutors.

☐ *Initial testing.* Testing often takes place at the central office of a literacy project and in sites throughout the community like libraries.

☐ *Assessment and placement.* If you are a faculty member or student in the field of education and testing, you can assess test results and make recommendations about learners' current reading abilities. From an assessment, suggestions can be made about what course of study would be appropriate for particular learners.

The Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) in Pennsylvania, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania United Way/PLUS Task Force, has developed an on-campus Assessment Center. The Center screens students and helps determine which local literacy program is appropriate for the learners' individual needs. Depending on learners' skill level and goals, they are referred to basic tutoring programs, ABE classes or high school equivalency programs. CCAC staff train volunteers who serve as the assessors. By 1987, thirty-one volunteers had been trained to work at the Center, interviewing learners, and administering simple word recognition tests. Following testing and assessment, the learners are referred to a literacy program and given assistance in contacting the program.

☐ *Testing for learning disabilities.* Some adult learners have a learning disability. If you have expertise in this area, diagnosis, recommendations and advice are very helpful to local literacy programs. You can serve as a consultant who is available to work with tutors over the phone or to lead workshops on adult learning disabilities.

☐ *Follow-up testing*. There is a need to assess the progress of learners, teachers and tutors. Designing a follow-up testing procedure or helping to administer the test at designated sites around the community are ways to help out with this crucial process.

Learner orientation

Orientation for learners is another ongoing project at literacy programs. In projects that use tutors, there is often a delay between the time a learner makes contact with a program and when he or she gets placed in a class or with a tutor. In order to retain confidence and interest on the part of the learners, some groups have organized an orientation session for learners. The session focuses on what the program entails, what the learners can expect, and what questions and anxieties the learners may have.

☐ *Role playing*. Literacy programs sometimes use role playing in training and orientation for both tutors and adult learners. Skits focus on a variety of situations including the first meeting between a tutor and learner, a learner's family discouraging him/her from continuing to learn, a tutor pressuring a learner to study subjects that are of no interest to the learner, or a tutor or learner being chronically late or missing tutoring meetings. There is a measure of uncertainty and sometimes fear accompanying an adult's reentry into the world of education and learning. New tutors and teachers also get nervous about beginning their work. Using role playing exercises helps to bring out those fears and address them.

The director of a literacy program in Seattle, Washington, suggested that people from a college or university help design and produce role playing skits. If adult learners in a program are interested, they could also get involved in writing and appearing in the skits.

Another way to participate in role playing exercises is to help moderate a discussion group following the skits. These skits can produce strong reactions. The conversations can get very emotional. Having a neutral moderator can be helpful.

Tutor orientation and training

There is a constant need for orientation and training workshops in programs that use tutors. Literacy programs may also provide training for volunteers who are not directly involved in tutoring but may have contact with learners by phone or during testing or assessment. Training programs vary in length from group to group, but the average is about twelve hours spread out over three or four sessions. Training takes place at different times and places; sometimes at night, sometimes during the day or on weekends. Individuals with flexible schedules could help out in this area by serving as trainers.

☐ *Initial training.* Initial or pre-service training, particularly for tutors, is extremely important. By receiving instruction on how to train tutors, you can expand a program's ability to reach and train more volunteers.

At Rice University in Houston, Texas, the coordinator of the Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP) has been trained as a tutor trainer. He became a tutor through the local Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) group and then took a training course that enables him to train volunteers using the LVA method. The Rice program now has the capability of training students and other interested volunteers on campus, at times that are convenient for members of the college or university community.

☐ *In-service training.* Once initial training and orientation have taken place, there is a need for follow-up or "in-service" training for staff, volunteers, and learners in a literacy program. Topics for a one- to two-hour in-service training session include: how to use a computer to do your recordkeeping, liability insurance for literacy programs, an introduction to learning disabilities, writing exercises to reinforce reading skills, using the newspaper as a teaching tool, or reading comprehension.

At Literacy Volunteers of America-New Jersey (LVA-NJ), the state director invited a doctoral candidate in adult learning disabilities from Teacher's College at Columbia University to serve as a consultant to the literacy program. The doctoral candidate was able to use LVA-NJ's pool of learners and tutors to get research information for her dissertation; LVA-NJ tutors, learners, and staff benefited from her workshops, presentations, and general consulting services.

If you have expertise in any of these areas, you could arrange to present a formal or informal talk at the literacy program. Another option is to serve on a consultant basis. Arrange to be available by phone if people have questions or hold weekly office hours.

Materials for use with learners

Literacy programs need books and materials for learners. Some programs have money to purchase textbooks; other groups rely on materials at hand or materials that can be produced cheaply and easily. If you help produce learning materials, when you are doing design, lay-out or printing you may want to teach the people you are working with—fellow volunteers, staff people or learners—how to perform those tasks or use those skills. Teach and share your expertise whenever and wherever you can.

☐ *Commercial texts.* Some literacy programs have money in the budget to purchase commercially produced reading series and workbooks. It would be helpful if a faculty member, graduate student, or undergraduate could preview the various series which are available and make recommendations to the literacy program person in charge of buying materials. This could be done in partnership with a group of learners.

☐ *Neighborhood stories, oral histories, and biographies.* Interview learners and other people in the neighborhood and community to get stories about the area. Turn the stories into a book for the program. For students and faculty interested in making literacy work part of an academic course, an oral history project can double as an independent study project.

☐ *Learner stories and poems.* Work with learners to develop their stories, poems, or autobiographies. Literacy Volunteers of New York City, Inc., produces the *Big Apple Journal* which compiles stories, poems, and thoughts of learners in the program. It also includes some art work and illustrations by the learners.

☐ *Letter writing.* Writing is a powerful way to reinforce and expand a learner's emerging skills as a reader.

At the University of Pennsylvania, part of a graduate education course linked adult learners in an Adult Basic Education class with graduate students in the School of Education. The learners and students, who had never met or spoken on the phone, got to know one another by writing weekly letters.

☐ *Cookbooks.* In Providence, Rhode Island, a local women's agency incorporates a learning project into its other services. The women produced a cookbook using their own recipes and illustrations. They learned design and layout skills as they developed the book.

☐ *Picture files.* In English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, it is helpful to have a file of pictures which represent single words (apple, car, or football). Taken from magazines and newspapers, fixed to paper or thin cardboard, and organized by subject or alphabetically, these picture files are useful to tutors and learners.

☐ *Computer lessons.* Some of the new Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) programs have "authoring" software. This means that lessons, vocabulary building exercises, paragraphs, and comprehension questions can be tailored to fit the individual needs or level of a particular learner. It takes time to enter these lessons into the computer. This type of project might appeal to people who are comfortable with computers and wish to do work on their own time.

☐ *Menus, job applications, or voter registration forms.* While this may seem trivial, it is often everyday reading material such as school bulletins, shopping circulars, or community newsletters that learners need to study. It is relatively simple to compile a collection of forms, applications, and tests from local businesses, government agencies, neighborhood groups, and social service programs.

Putting together a series of menus from local restaurants is helpful as well. A young learner in a literacy program in the Northeast described his experiences as a single person, inviting women out to dinner and having to insist on going to Howard Johnson's because it was the only restaurant in town with pictures on the menu. One of his goals as a learner was to go into any restaurant he chose and be able to read the menu.

☐ *Newsletters.* If the learners are interested, individuals with a background in journalism or writing can help set up a newsletter for the learners in a program. While you provide advice and editorial assistance, the learners can practice their skills by writing articles, conducting interviews, and creating artwork for the newsletter.

Recruiting learners and volunteers

Literacy programs need to recruit learners and workers. They also need to solicit the support of the community at large. This takes a lot of leg work and phone work. Putting in time on a recruiting campaign or committing yourself to canvass a neighborhood or a school district is a good way to help out.

☐ *Go door-to-door in local neighborhoods.* Explain that you are not there to sell anything. Introduce the literacy program and describe the services it provides. Leave a card or brochure and encourage people to call for more information. Get a name and phone number if someone wants more information sent to him or her. Some people you talk to may be interested in getting help for themselves or a friend. Other people may be interested in finding out how they can be of help.

☐ *Canvass other social service agencies in person or over the phone.* Tell them about the services provided by the local literacy agency and see if they might begin to refer clients in need of tutoring.

☐ *Go to local malls, hand out flyers and bookmarks, and talk to people.* Once again, explain the services available at local literacy projects. Bring clipboards and sign up sheets with you. Check with the mall management company to see about the procedure for getting access to the mall's common space.

☐ *Recruit people on campus.* Work through student organizations, departments, dormitories, and other groups. See *Chapter 7: Recruiting and Promotion* for more ideas about recruiting college and university community members.

☐ *Work through local churches and other religious organizations.* You can arrange to have notices posted in church bulletins or you can make direct presentations to congregations.

☐ *Make contact with local neighborhood groups and organizations.* These organizations range from tenant groups, day care facilities, senior citizens homes and nutrition sites, or veterans' groups. See if you can speak to the group members directly. The alternative is to place notices on bulletin boards or in newsletters.

☐ *Work through the local school system.* Since helping one's children read and write better is often a primary goal for illiterate parents, schools are a good place to look for adult learners as well as children who are falling behind and need help. Teachers and administrators notice when parents do not respond to written notices or seem to have difficulty filling out forms. They may be able to help you reach the parents who are in need of tutoring. Schools can also be a source of volunteers. The Parent Teacher Association or the Parent Teacher Organization may be interested in helping out.

☐ *Distribute materials at the local libraries.* Although the library may be involved already in literacy, check to make sure. If not, recruit the librarians and the library patrons by personal appeals, bookmarks, and posters.

☐ *Make contact with other colleges or universities.* If there are other schools in your area, see if they might be interested in getting involved. If they already are, share ideas and explore joint projects. These might include: a fundraising project for a local literacy agency, a major learner recruiting drive in three hard-to-reach neighborhoods in a city, a paint and fix-up project in a community learning center, or a book drive to stock a learning center's library.

Child care

A frustration for many learners is an inability to find cheap, trustworthy child care during times when they would like to attend classes or meet with tutors. By providing a consistent corps of people who take responsibility for watching over children, a greater number of learners, particularly young mothers, can have access to education.

☐ *Organize a group that takes children on trips.* You can visit local playgrounds, museums, parks, or libraries.

☐ *Organize a reading group.* Stay at the learning center, school, church basement, or library where the learners are meeting and read aloud to the children. It is helpful to work in conjunction with the teachers or tutors so that what is being read to the children is consistent with stories their parents can read to them.

☐ *Organize a group that involves the children in athletics.* Soccer games, basketball leagues, or clinics with college and university athletes or coaches is a good way of involving the athletic department with a literacy program. Incorporate reading into the activities by reading books on sports or reading the rules of the game.

Transportation

A barrier to learning for some adults is an inability to get to the classrooms or tutorial sites. Fear of getting on the wrong bus, the wrong train, or getting out of one's familiar surroundings can be paralyzing.

☐ *Run a van pool that picks up learners and delivers them to classrooms or tutorial sites.*

☐ *Collect bus, subway, or street maps and simplify them for use by learners.* Mark out the route to the learning center and type up simple information about fares and the phone number of the center.

Office work and support services

Having competent, reliable people to organize and run the central office of a literacy program is critical. There are a number of ways to help out and take pressure off the staff. Some agencies may need support around the time of big projects (a conference or awards ceremony) while others may need daily or weekly assistance. It is helpful to clarify that from the beginning.

☐ *Answer the phone.* If the literacy program has a toll-free number or hotline that people call at night, there is a need for follow-up calls the next day. If there is a big public relations campaign underway, the program may need extra people to handle the increased volume of calls. Answering the phone is relatively simple, but make sure you receive training about how to record information, how to refer people, and how to answer specific questions about the literacy program.

☐ *Help with filing and record keeping*. Literacy programs have to track the progress of learners, teachers and tutors, and make reports. This generates a lot of paperwork which needs to be kept updated, recorded, and filed.

☐ *Serve as the receptionist*. If a group of people is committed to staffing the literacy program office each week, it allows the office staff to do field work or attend meetings. Design a calendar and have people sign up for two-, three- or four-hour shifts. Make sure you have a back-up plan in case someone cannot make it.

☐ *Help with bulk mailing projects*. If the organization has to send out a newsletter, conference announcement, or other bulk mailing, you could help out by stuffing envelopes, collating mailings, or licking stamps. This is a good opportunity to undertake a project with a large group of people. Turn it into a party, read stories out loud as you work, and enjoy yourselves.

Fundraising

Teaching people to read costs money. Even when a program utilizes volunteer tutors and staff, someone has to buy stamps, pay the phone bill, and buy books. Fundraising events are a wonderful way for an informal group of people or an established campus organization to provide much-needed assistance to a literacy project. For a more detailed look at how to raise money for on-campus programs, turn to *Chapter 9: Fund Development*. The following are simple ideas for one-time fundraising events that can also double as public outreach and awareness projects.

☐ *Used book sale*. Encourage students at your college or university to donate their used textbooks to a "Books for Literacy" sale. Set up the sale at the beginning and end of each semester and donate the proceeds to the local literacy agency.

☐ *"Run to Read," "Dance to Read," "Read for Literacy," or "Walk for Knowledge."* Sign up people who are willing to participate and have them get campus and community sponsors. For example, a sponsor can donate $1 for every book read in a seven-day period or $2.50 for every mile walked.

☐ *Solicitations in stores and malls.* Contact the local supermarket or shopping mall and see if people can stand outside and solicit the shoppers as they go in and out of the stores. Have a flyer, bookmark or button to hand out to contributors in return for their donations. Most stores and malls have specific regulations about soliciting so make sure and contact the managers.

☐ *T-shirts, buttons and posters.* Designate a week or two in the cafeterias, student union, departmental offices or dining halls when you can sell T-shirts, buttons, or posters that promote literacy.

Public relations

Literacy programs are always looking for new ways to advertise their services, attract new learners and volunteers, and, in general, gain increased exposure and credibility within the local community.

☐ *Videos.* Video can be used to make documentaries describing the services and programs available at local literacy programs for use in recruiting learners, tutors, possible donors, and community supporters. Public service announcements can be distributed to local television stations for recruiting and public relations projects.

At the Rochester Institute of Technology in New York, students with an interest and expertise in video camera work developed three 30-second public service announcements for the local literacy program.

☐ *Posters and brochures.* Everybody needs brochures; everybody needs posters. You can get involved by designing brochures, flyers, bookmarks, posters, or ads for the newspaper. Adult learners can be reached through print material. Challenge yourself to come up with creative, sharp ways to recruit learners through posters which use symbols, pictures, and simple phrases. If the tutoring or teaching services are offered at no cost, be sure to include the word "free" in the material.

☐ *Public speakers.* Community outreach, awareness, and education are important parts of any literacy program's goals. Some literacy groups offer training in public speaking and education. Faculty members and administrators, as well as students, could agree to speak before religious groups, neighborhood coalitions, local business organizations, or service clubs.

At Hardin Simmons College in Abilene, Texas, students from the Hispanic Club make regular visits to local high schools. The predominantly Mexican-American high school students make contact with the Hardin Simmons undergraduates, have an opportunity to ask questions about college, and meet some college students. The Hardin Simmons students keep in touch with the community and encourage the high school students to stay in school and think about attending college.

☐ *Outreach.* Outreach projects can be less formal than a public speaking engagement. Visits to local organizations, schools, or neighborhood groups to talk to members about literacy.

Recognition and award ceremonies

Like other organizations, most literacy programs have some way that they recognize achievement, dedication, and outstanding contributions. Learners, staff people, volunteers, and fundraisers often are honored at banquets, luncheons, and other ceremonies. You can organize these types of events or you can help add to them.

☐ *Find a site for an awards banquet or recognition ceremony.* The library on campus, a cafeteria for a banquet, or any other facility on campus can lend an air of celebration to whatever ceremony is taking place.

☐ *Provide the entertainment for the event.* Recruit singing groups, musicians, jugglers, or the campus comic. While some organizations have formal programs for recognition ceremonies, a little entertainment can provide a welcome change from lengthy speeches.

☐ *Design the program posters, brochures, or flyers for the event.* It is rewarding if participants can take home a program with their name on it. It serves as a memento of the award ceremony.

Conferences and meetings

Literacy programs sometimes have local, state, or regional conferences. Having access to the resources of a college or university when organizing an event like a conference would be a great help to a local literacy program.

☐ *Hold the conference at your campus.* If an organization has an affiliation with someone at a college or university, the conference fee for use of facilities and buildings will often be waived.

☐ *Help reserve rooms, arrange for food, or secure parking spaces.* It is helpful to have someone who is familiar with the physical plant of the college or university take care of logistics. Also, a person on campus will often know with whom to speak and how to cut through some of the inevitable red tape.

☐ *Make a speech.* If you are the president of a college or university or a faculty member with an expertise in the field of education, you can say a few words at a recognition ceremony.

☐ *Photograph or videotape the event.* It is important to have a record of the conference for use in public relations and fundraising efforts. It also helps the literacy organization keep track of its history.

☐ *Provide willing workers to sit at registration desks, troubleshoot, or put up signs.* Conferences are a time when there is a need for a group of people to assist the staff so they can be free to give workshops and participate fully in the conference.

Program Ideas for Students

Existing student groups and organizations

Students have an enormous amount of energy and creativity.

Students have an enormous amount of energy and creativity. Although students graduate and move on, during their stay they provide a pool of talent that can enliven a dynamic literacy project. When approaching students to participate in a literacy campaign, try to work through the students themselves. Find two or three students you know and get them excited about literacy. Include them in the planning and organization of the project. Encourage them to take a leadership role in the literacy effort. When recruiting students remember that the most effective way to reach young people is through other young people. For those students on campus who are older than average, appeal to them to use skills they have acquired at work or at home to help literacy efforts (see "Program ideas for non-traditional students," page 61).

Encourage students to take a leadership role in the literacy effort.

Some groups or organizations have a particular talent or area of expertise which may be of enormous help to the literacy effort you are putting together. Here are some ideas for projects which focus those skills on the issue of enhancing literacy services within the community.

Artists

Take advantage of the creativity and expertise of artists within the college or university community. Talk to students and faculty members in the Art, Theater, Graphic Design, or Music Departments. Look into such organizations as singing groups, artists' organizations, or student bands.

☐ *Role playing.* Get involved in designing and presenting role playing exercises for new tutors, existing staff members, and learners.

☐ *Performances.* Volunteer and learner recognition take place in most literacy programs. Your singing group, string quartet, jazz ensemble, comedy troupe, or theater club could provide some exciting entertainment at a celebration or presentation.

☐ *Benefits.* Literacy groups need money. Colleges and universities have talented groups of performers. It is possible to organize a benefit concert to raise money for the local literacy programs.

☐ *Free or discounted tickets.* For the learner of the month or the volunteer of the week, a free trip to a concert or performance is a creative way for a local literacy program to extend its congratulations or appreciation.

Athletes

Athletes have off-seasons when they have extra time on their hands. At some schools, the athletes and the coaches are local heros and have high visibility in the local community. They can serve as advocates for your literacy efforts. Here are some ways to get the athletes involved in literacy work:

☐ *No pass/no play tutors.* In some high schools, there is now a no pass/no play restriction on student athletes. These high school athletes could benefit from a college athlete who serves as a role model, tutor, and general source of encouragement.

☐ *Free or discounted tickets.* Another way for a literacy program to recognize and encourage good work on the part of volunteers, staff members, and learners is to provide seats at home games or special athletic events.

☐ *Public service announcements.* Particularly at schools with established, successful teams, you could recruit the current star or a popular coach to make public service announcements on behalf of the local literacy program.

At the University of Minnesota, the football coach appears on television to endorse the reading and learning programs in the area.

Ethnic and cultural groups

On any given campus there are groups which bring together people of similar backgrounds or shared cultural heritages. In some cases, there may be analogous groups within the community in need of some assistance. English as a Second Language (ESL) programs would benefit from the involvement of the corresponding cultural club.

☐ *ESL conversation groups.* These can be a mixture of community people learning English and college or university students learning the native language or learning about the culture and heritage of a particular group.

☐ *Information sessions and training for staff and volunteers.* College or university students could give presentations to staff and volunteers of a local literacy project about the cultural traditions of various ethnic groups.

☐ *Tutoring.* College or university students can serve as positive role models for learners when matched according to shared heritage or ethnic background.

Foreign language department

There is an obvious kinship between the foreign language department and any kind of English as a Second Language (ESL) program. Approach students and professors to see if they might be interested in getting involved as volunteers or in linking literacy work to their scholarly pursuits.

☐ *Development of materials.* Students and faculty could be encouraged to develop simple reading materials and writing exercises for ESL learners. With instructions in the learner's native language and text and exercises in English, these materials could serve as a good transition for the learners.

☐ *Presentations to local cultural and ethnic groups.* In order to spread the word to the community about literacy projects and the services they provide, there is a need for people to speak to local groups. If you are proficient in Spanish, French, Portuguese or any other language, you could arrange to do some public speaking on behalf of the local literacy organization.

☐ *Learner orientation.* When learners first enter a literacy program, they are often confused, nervous, and scared. In response to this, some literacy groups offer an orientation session for learners. If you are fluent in a language other than English, you could attend the orientation sessions and provide learners who are not proficient in English with a means to communicate comfortably and get their questions answered.

Fraternities and sororities

Fraternities and sororities are organizations which, because of their permanence, can provide continuity of service to a local literacy program. The national offices of the Greek letter organizations identify ongoing philanthropic work for the campus chapters. Because service is an integral part of the structure of fraternities and sororities, they can set up a relationship with a literacy group that lasts for years. Project ideas include:

☐ *Fundraising efforts.* A fraternity or sorority can sponsor and organize a fundraising event each semester to raise money for a literacy project. Car washes, dance marathons, or outright solicitations are among the events that can be tried.

☐ *Tutoring project.* A particular fraternity or sorority can join with a particular local literacy program or a school system to recruit and provide a steady source of tutors.

☐ *Day care for children of learners.* Fraternity and sorority members can look after children while parents are being tutored or are in class. Reading aloud to the children, taking them on field trips, or organizing games would enable single parents or people who do not have access to regular child care to go to class.

Computer club

Computers are used in the management of literacy programs as well as serving as instructional tools for learners. Offering the knowledge and resources of a computer club to a literacy project is a good way to help literacy service providers and learners, and to teach the computer group about a new use for their machines.

☐ *Creating a data base.* Literacy programs need to keep track of learners and their progress. If the program utilizes volunteers, they also need to be kept in an up-to-date file. Individuals with an interest in databases can put tutor and student information on a database, as well as create mailing lists and computerized bookkeeping systems.

☐ *Helping make purchasing decisions.* If a local group gets some money to buy computer hardware or software, people with knowledge about computers can help sort through various brands and stores. Make sure time is spent getting to know the literacy program and getting to know what it needs. Then, recommendations can be made about what to buy and where to buy it.

Program ideas for non-traditional students

A growing number of college and university students are not between the ages of 18 and 24 years. Not all college or university students live on campus. Those students who are older than average or who are commuting may have a different approach to volunteer work from younger students. Older students, who may be working full-time jobs and caring for children as well as attending classes, have less extra time than other students. Older, working students "have no time to waste," according to Dr. Carol Ryan, head of volunteer services at Metropolitan State University in Minnesota. "Working adults ... want training and a specified commitment they can work into their busy schedule." Dr. Ryan adds that for non-traditional students, opportunities for academic credit tied to literacy service may be very important.

Older students may have work experience, fields of expertise and varied contacts.

All students can contribute a great deal to literacy efforts. Older students may have work experience, fields of expertise, and contacts that are more varied than those of a traditional student.

☐ *Role models.* Older students who participate as literacy volunteers can also serve as role models for their students. A fifty-year-old man learning to read and write with the help of a fifty-year-old college or university student will see the truth behind the message, "you are never too old to learn."

☐ *Expertise and experience.* The professional experience, skills, and knowledge of older students can come into play in special workshops for literacy programs. Students with experience in the working world, as employees or employers, can offer pointers to

Individuals with extensive volunteer or work experience could provide valuable suggestions on what makes a good volunteer program.

learners on how to look for and obtain a job. Older students can also offer advice on worksite skills: how to fill out work orders and receipts, take messages, set up a letter, and complete other job-related skills. Non-traditional students with children, or with nursing experience, can offer child care and nutrition workshops.

An older student with previous volunteer experience or experience in business, management, or administration can provide help in setting up an on-campus board and organization. If a student-run literacy project is preparing a budget, for example, help from an experienced mentor can be of great use. If a campus literacy project is thinking about approaching a business for a donation, getting the advice of an older student with business experience could be useful. Individuals with extensive volunteer or work experience could provide valuable suggestions to campus groups on what makes a good volunteer program operate smoothly.

Any type of work experience can be helpful: art, office work, construction, mechanical work, or child-rearing. Volunteers with a background in these areas can provide important ideas and contributions about things like posters, special events, organizing day care, mailing lists, or setting up a library or office.

☐ *Community contacts.* Non-traditional students, particularly those who come from the area where the college or university is located, can be an excellent source of advice about community businesses and agencies, and may already have good contacts in the area. A student who knows people within a civic organization, community center, service agency, business, or school can expand a campus literacy project's community network. It is easier to make contact with a local tutoring and day care agency, for example, if an older student has a child using the services and already knows the program directors. Asking a business for the use of a meeting room for tutoring and testing may be made easier if a former employee of that business makes the request.

Beyond graduation

An involvement in literacy work need not end after graduation. There are ways to pursue a career in the field of literacy and adult education. It is also possible to maintain involvement in a volunteer capacity.

If you are a student interested in literacy work as a career, you can:

☐ *Do graduate work in Adult Education or Bilingual Education.* There are a number of universities that offer degrees in Adult Education. They include Syracuse University, University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers University, and Columbia University.

☐ *Become a teacher.* Basic skills like reading and writing are taught in elementary and secondary schools. Entering the teaching profession requires a profound commitment to literacy and learning.

☐ *Join Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA).* A number of community literacy projects use VISTA volunteers to do everything from fundraising, learner recruitment and public relations to tutor training and tutoring. VISTA volunteers serve in low-income communities across the nation and work on poverty-related issues. They are paid a subsistence allowance by the federal agency ACTION and serve for a minimum of one year.

☐ *Work in a nonprofit literacy agency.* Literacy organizations need fundraisers, managers, public relations staff, conference coordinators, and research staff. If your career interests lie in any of those areas, you can pursue them and still be involved in literacy work.

There are nonprofit job networks such as ACCESS that can help you with the search for literacy work. For more information, see *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts.*

Whatever kind of work you engage in, you can still be of service to community literacy programs. You can continue to serve in the same way you did while in school by volunteering on weekends or after work. You can also use your new skills, contacts, and expertise to help the local projects.

☐ *If you work at a bank,* you can serve on the board of directors of the local literacy project and provide financial advice and services.

☐ *If you are a lawyer,* you can help write bylaws, give legal clinics, and help the local program with liability insurance.

☐ *If you work in a restaurant,* you can provide food at tutor training sessions, learner and volunteer recognition ceremonies, and fund-raising events.

☐ *If you work for a company or corporation,* you can help your employer investigate and set up a workplace literacy program for personnel who have low literacy levels.

The list of ideas is limited only by your imagination and your desire to help people learn to read.

Program Ideas for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

Faculty, staff, and administrators can provide invaluable support to college or university literacy efforts. Because they are based on the values of reading, writing, and critical thinking, literacy campaigns appeal to the mission of higher education.

☐ *Individuals* can help service efforts in a number of ways: through their visible leadership, community contacts, academic programs, commitment of physical and financial resources, and interest in literacy at work.

Support can also come from an *institutional commitment* to a campus literacy effort. Colleges and universities often play a vital role in the community as employers and advocates. The existing ties between the institution and the community can provide valuable contacts and ideas for a campus literacy program.

Leadership and moral support

Leadership can make literacy efforts more visible and legitimate and boost the spirit of volunteers.

☐ *Creation of a campus task force.* By bringing together administrators, students, faculty, staff, and community members who are interested in literacy issues, higher education leaders can take the first step towards a strong, unified commitment. A task force can work to assess the needs of the community and the resources of the institution.

At Brown University in Rhode Island, a representative of the president convenes a monthly literacy task force meeting. The task force includes student leaders, deans, the provost, faculty members from departments as diverse as theater and Portuguese and Brazilian studies as well as representatives from personnel, public relations, Brown's Center for Public Service and the Rhode Island State Department of Education. By coming together, the members inform one another of activities and resources across campus and in the community. For example, the personnel office was able to set up a worksite literacy program for Brown employees, with the advice of staff from the Center for Public Service and a faculty member who served on the board of a local literacy agency.

Working together, members of a task force can plan a strategy to meet local needs by using campus resources. In joining representatives of all parts of the university community, a task force encourages common goals and makes individuals aware of other interests and resources. (See *Chapter 3: Starting a Program* for more advice about setting up a literacy task force.)

☐ *Visible and vocal commitment.* By declaring an institution's support of literacy campaigns, administrators can create a spirit of commitment and involvement across the campus. Speeches and public statements promote publicity and raise campus awareness of literacy issues. The university can be a powerful voice in local, state, regional, and national affairs.

Leadership from presidents, chancellors, and other administrators encourages the participation of students, staff, and faculty members.

Leadership from presidents, chancellors, and other administrators encourages participation of students, staff, and faculty members.

☐ *Commitment of university or college resources.* Administrators can support literacy efforts by publicly acknowledging and pledging support for literacy initiatives such as internship and service-learning programs that involve tutoring or other literacy work and by encouraging research on literacy issues. Other valuable means of support are listed in this section under "Physical resources" and "Financial resources."

Community outreach

Another way institutions and individuals can assist literacy efforts is by helping organizers tap the community contacts of members of the university. Many individuals who work on campus are already involved in local civic affairs, politics, and community service projects. They can provide help in a number of ways:

☐ *Information.* Administrators, faculty, staff, and local students, particularly commuting students, often are members of or know leaders of local civic organizations and literacy agencies and can provide important information on service opportunities to campus groups. These contacts can help establish a campus program and give it legitimacy in the community, provide experience and advice, and assist in fundraising efforts.

☐ *Volunteers.* Some administrators, faculty, and staff may already offer their time and skills to community agencies in a number of ways. Check to see if staff or faculty at your institution are tutors or volunteers in community literacy agencies. These volunteers can provide advice, experience, and support to new volunteers from the campus community. Do not overlook them when setting up a campus task force, selecting an advisory board for a student project, or creating partnerships with local service providers.

Recruit faculty and staff as volunteers.

Recruit staff and faculty as tutors and volunteers. There is no better way for students, staff, and faculty to get to know one another and work effectively together. Cooperation of the groups also demonstrates the importance the groups place on the issue. Members of the faculty and staff who volunteer as tutors in community agencies may share advice, teaching ideas, and even transportation with student volunteers. Administrators and faculty members frequently serve on the boards of local agencies. Use these contacts. Board members can help campus efforts become legitimate in the eyes of community groups, and can provide special advice and insight about literacy issues and existing community services.

Faculty and staff who have a longer-standing commitment to a particular community than most students can be effective volunteers in a literacy effort.

At Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, more than twenty-five employees serve as literacy tutors through the Employee Volunteer Literacy Program. Yale employees tutor reading, writing, and ESL twice a week through the program which is a collaboration of Yale's Office of Volunteer Services, Literacy Volunteers of America-New Haven and New Haven Adult Basic Education.

☐ *Policy.* Colleges and universities can have an impact on public policy. By supporting community and national efforts for literacy, administrators and faculty can affect educational and public affairs.

In Philadelphia, faculty members and administrators from Temple University, the Community College of Philadelphia, and the University of Pennsylvania serve on the Mayor's Commission for Literacy in Philadelphia. The Commission coordinates literacy programs throughout the city and develops policy recommendations, and has had an important role in making literacy a priority issue for the U.S. Conference of Mayors, as well as for Philadelphia. Using its college connections, the Mayor's Commission created a new tutoring center based at Temple University.

Scholarly opportunities

One of the missions of colleges and universities is to educate and further the progress of learning and knowledge. There are several ways to make literacy a part of academic programs. Faculty members can have a strong influence here.

At Brevard Community College in Cocoa, Florida, the Open Campus Program reaches 5,000-6,000 adult basic learners a year. Brevard also operates a program called BEST-PAL, combining basic reading classes with parenting classes, and hires Adult Basic Education/Teacher/Recruiter/Counselors (ABE/TRCs) who work with adult learners throughout the area. Brevard has been successful in recruiting the hard-to-reach, with eighteen classes serving more than 200 adults who read at lower than a fifth-grade reading level.

☐ *Make literacy a part of the curriculum.* A number of community colleges and other universities have made basic reading and writing courses a part of their curriculum. These colleges provide experienced professional teachers and offer their services to members of the community. These institutions have seen that their mission is not only to educate the well-prepared, but also to offer opportunities for many levels of learners.

At City University of New York (CUNY), literacy instruction is supported by funds from the Adult Education Act and the Municipal Assistance Corporation. Twelve two- and four-year campuses in the CUNY system offer classes in basic reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a Second Language. More than 8,500 learners were served between 1984 and 1986. CUNY has been particularly successful in recruiting learners reading below a sixth grade level.

☐ *Support service-learning projects.* Commitment to service flourishes when institutions foster the ethic of civic involvement in all aspects of the educational experience. Service benefits all: the university or college by creating a positive community image; the students, by giving them an opportunity to enrich their learning experiences; and the community, by providing a wealth of powerful, enthusiastic student volunteers and encouraging good institution-community relations. By sponsoring service-learning programs, faculty and administrators encourage public service.

Through departments of education, social work, urban studies, languages, sociology, or philosophy, faculty can encourage students to become involved in literacy tutoring. Academic internships, independent study courses, and classes with a service component are all ways of including service in the curriculum.

At Boston University in Massachusetts, student tutors in the Collaborations for Literacy program participate in a one-semester course called "Training in Literacy Tutoring for Community-Based Adults." The class, worth half of a full course credit, includes eighteen hours of tutor training, thirteen weeks of lesson preparation and tutoring, in-service workshops for tutors, meetings with the faculty advisor, and a project which can be either a weekly journal or two case studies.

Other examples of service-learning courses, and suggestions for earning credit for learning through service activities, can be found in *Chapter 6: Literacy and Learning.*

☐ *Develop scholarly interests in literacy.* Many faculty members already have interests in reading, bilingual education, and educational policy. If interested students approach faculty sponsors, still other professors may become interested in literacy. The possibilities are endless: conducting evaluative research and testing, developing tutoring materials and tutor training programs, and studying the politics of literacy. Students and faculty are academically enriched by learning new information and furthering the basis of knowledge. Their work can be of great use to the community and literacy providers.

At Pennsylvania State University, the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy coordinates the Adult Literacy and Technology Project. The project, headed by a national committee of literacy experts, supports the development of technology used in adult literacy projects and disseminates information on computers and software for literacy programs.

Physical resources

Even if resources are limited, universities and colleges can offer physical support in a number of ways. These contributions can make a world of difference to campus and local literacy efforts.

☐ *Office space.* A campus-run initiative needs a home, with space for working, record-keeping, and a telephone (with answering machine). A reliable address and contact place gives strength, efficiency, and continuity to a project, and makes it easier for community members to reach the project. Access to a typewriter, a telephone, a photocopying machine, a computer, and other office equipment is helpful.

☐ *Tutoring and training space.* At many schools, classrooms are vacant during off-hours: evenings, weekends, and late afternoons. By offering space for tutor training, colleges and universities can make it easier for campus volunteers to participate in training sessions. Rooms on campus also provide convenient tutoring locations. Another possibility is to create a "learning center" in a campus building, where tutors and learners can meet. Books and other resources provided by community agencies or the institution can be made available in a learning center as well.

☐ *Library facilities.* Libraries can provide reading books, reference materials, and good learning opportunities for older learners. Many public libraries have made space available for tutoring. Also, the college or university library may be able to offer use of a room during specified hours. Libraries can reserve a small section of books for adult beginning readers. Find out if there is a free shelf available, obtain permission for literacy learners to use the library, and introduce them to the materials during class time or tutoring sessions.

The Learning Resource Center in the library at Keene State College in New Hampshire has books, curriculum guides and other materials for use with learners. Tutors from the Adult Tutorial Program located at the college use this collection for tutoring and reading materials.

Financial resources

There are a number of relatively inexpensive commitments that colleges and universities can make to literacy programs. The return on a small investment can be quite large, in terms of community service, institutional and community morale, and publicity both on- and off-campus.

☐ *Support for service program costs.* Schools can provide assistance to student, faculty, or staff volunteers by sponsoring training programs, offering transportation to community agencies, or providing seed money for a library of tutor training materials. Office needs (like those mentioned under "Physical resources," above) can be supplied inexpensively by allowing a campus program to share the equipment of other offices.

☐ *Financial advice.* Expertise is one of the greatest gifts of the university. All colleges and universities employ professional fundraisers who know of a variety of resources, from alumni to corporations and government agencies. The development office can provide suggestions on identifying donors, creating a budget, preparing grant proposals, or organizing direct mail solicitations.

☐ *Matching funds and other incentives.* Student fundraisers work best when they have a clear goal. By offering incentives to reach a goal, the president or chancellor can help support student efforts. A challenge gift of $1 for each $5 raised will help students reach their goals and will demonstrate a university's commitment to literacy projects.

Worksite literacy projects

One of the largest and most important commitments that universities and colleges can make is to support the literacy of their own employees. A college or university is not isolated from the literacy problems of the rest of the nation and suffers the same losses of productivity, safety, and quality of life from employee illiteracy as do other businesses. The Business Council for Effective Literacy estimates that 15 percent of the nation's workforce is functionally illiterate. The problem is not confined to workers in unskilled tasks, but affects the professional workforce, too.

A university is not isolated from the literacy problems of the rest of the nation.

By having trained, literate employees, the university benefits in many areas—increased skills, job safety, and productivity. By providing learning opportunities and support for all members of its community, an institution of higher learning can demonstrate a true commitment to educational opportunity. Support of a workplace learning program helps not only the university but the larger community by becoming a model project for other businesses and corporations to emulate.

At the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, one food service employee memorized 1,000 recipes and pretended to be able to follow the written instructions for cooking. The director of food services discovered that the cook was only one of a number of functionally illiterate employees. With the help of the university's adult education center, the director set up remedial instruction programs in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The director of housing agreed to provide "released time" two hours a day, twice a week, for workers to participate in the program; over fifty food service workers have enrolled since.

Literacy issues at an institution must be considered with sensitivity, tact, and caring. A person cannot be forced to learn; employees must be willing to participate in programs. Reading and writing problems are a handicap to any worker. They can be embarrassing and risky for employees who fear losing their jobs.

An increasing number of corporations and unions are conducting successful worksite literacy programs, and their experiences provide useful models. Information on how to begin a program is available from the Business Council for Effective Literacy, and in the U.S. Department of Education's publication, "What Works in Worksite Literacy Programs." (See *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts.)*

LITERACY & LEARNING 6

Obtaining Academic Credit

Provide students with the opportunity to learn from doing.

Community service work, internships, and action research projects provide students with the opportunity to learn from doing. When service work is brought into the curriculum, students benefit in many ways. They obtain an opportunity to see the connection between theory and practice, and a chance to reflect on the issues raised in service. Volunteering for literacy makes concrete some otherwise abstract discussions about language, education, and public policy. Second, integration of literacy service into the curriculum can enrich students' experience by providing training and reinforcement from experienced members of the faculty. Supervision of service experiences can make a world of difference by encouraging reflection and action in a structured environment.

Credit is obtained for the learning that results from service or action research.

Some institutions have well-established means of bringing internships into the curriculum. Credit is not obtained for participation in a service project alone, but rather for the learning that results from service or action research. Reflection, reading, writing, and discussion are all ways to contribute to that learning process. In general, there are two routes to earning credit. Academic courses may include service internships or action research as a requirement or option for students enrolled in the course. Alternatively, students may develop independent study work with a faculty supervisor and use an internship as part of the coursework.

If you are a student interested in obtaining academic credit, explore your choices thoroughly. Find out about courses with service or action research components by consulting the course catalog or individual departments. Talk to instructors or students who have taken the course previously, and ask to look at the course syllabus. If there is no coursework that could have a literacy component at your institution, consider the option of an independent study program. Your interest and experience may prompt an interested faculty member to create a course on literacy with a service or action research component.

Coursework

There are many parts of the college or university curriculum that pertain to literacy issues, and courses that require service components may be offered in a variety of departments. Students and faculty may be able to apply literacy work to a class with fieldwork or internships.

If your institution does not offer internship or service opportunities in coursework, administrators, faculty, and students can encourage the addition of service-learning in many ways. Students and faculty may work together to revise course expectations to include internships. Administrators can support service-learning projects by encouraging students and faculty to include community work as part of their formal learning experiences.

Some departments that may provide opportunities include:

☐ *Education.* Departments of Education offer courses in reading theory, adult education, teacher preparation, and many other issues relevant to literacy. Fieldwork is an important part of many education programs and contacts with schools and agencies may be established already.

At Stanford University in California, a course on the American school system includes a literacy tutoring component. Students enrolled in the course can choose to work in a tutoring project for children or in a local adult literacy program.

☐ *English.* Many English departments have an interest in issues of language, composition, and teaching as well as in literature. Those issues are made quite real in service-learning.

English 654 at San Francisco State University in California is an academic class on teaching reading, with a strong service component. Each week, students meet in class for three hours and tutor for two hours. Each student develops an individual program for the person he or she tutors and learns to diagnose reading problems and to plan and evaluate lessons. Each lesson plan is designed with the supervision of a reading specialist and experienced tutors.

☐ *Political science, urban studies, and public policy.* Students and faculty members can bring an interest in literacy into courses with an internship. Faculty members, through their contacts with local government, can help students find internships at the state or city Department of Education. Students can research the politics and finances of adult literacy issues on a local, state, or national level.

There are many other possibilities for including literacy work in courses requiring an "action" component, or for bringing literacy work into courses that already require an independent project. In a computer science course, for example, a student can work with a local literacy agency and set up a project to create learning software for adult learners studying reading, writing, or math. Another idea is to help a local literacy agency create an information and management system for its records. In all these arrangements and projects, sustained, responsible commitment to the community and its agencies and organizations is important. The community should not be perceived of as a laboratory.

Independent study

Independent study requires more initial thought and responsibility than enrolling in an established course. Independent study may or may not be a possibility at your institution. If it is, you can usually shape the direction of your studies toward your particular interests. You can propose an individual independent study program or get together with other students interested in literacy and suggest a group seminar. Policies regarding independent or directed studies vary by institution, but there are some general guidelines.

☐ *Identify faculty sponsors.* You may know just the right person, or you may have to search through a number of departments. If you know an administrator who is interested, see if he or she will be an academic sponsor. What issues interest you in particular? If you are interested in doing research on learning acquisition, think about the psychology or education department. If you are interested in doing research in policy, try political science. Looking at the history of literacy programs? Try English, linguistics, or history. Publishing learners' articles, short stories, or poems can be a journalism project. Think about who would be interested in you and your proposed project. Individual faculty members may be interested in related issues, such as the correlation between illiteracy and poverty.

At Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York, one professor of African Studies/Religious Studies has sponsored several literacy internships in a local prison.

☐ *Prepare a rough outline for your independent study course.* In seeking faculty sponsorship, it helps to be organized and realistic. Include the following information:

What are your academic objectives? What do you intend to learn? What materials will you be using? What books do you plan to read to provide perspective on your experience?

Describe the proposed internship. Provide a job description, planned hours, and the address of the organization and supervisor.

What type of supervision and assistance will you need from your sponsor? How often will you meet? What will be your topics for discussion? Will you need help identifying readings?

What kind of work will you complete, and how will it be evaluated? What type of papers will you write? How are they to be graded? How will your internship be evaluated?

How many credits should you earn?

☐ *Discuss your plan with potential faculty supervisors and persuade one of them to sponsor your project and help you further develop the study plan.*

Make an appointment to talk to the potential sponsor. Introduce yourself and describe your proposed study plan and internship arrangements. Describe why your proposal has academic merit and fits into the goals of the university. Many faculty members may feel reluctant to sponsor internship/study programs since they feel that such experiences are not "academic." Be sure that you make a strong case for the academic aspect of your proposal.

At Brown University, a Group Independent Study Project was formed by students interested in literacy issues and was sponsored by a faculty member with an interest in literacy and by the staff of Brown's Center for Public Service. The students who participated in the planning meetings worked together to design topics and issues to be addressed in the course and to plan readings. Students are responsible for teaching sections of the class, and participate in literacy service projects including tutoring.

☐ *Discuss requirements with the interested faculty member.* What type of reading should you do? How will the internship be evaluated? Discuss your institution's specific procedures to obtain independent study credit. How many credits will be awarded?

RECRUITING & PROMOTION 7

Introduction

Once you have established a working core group of supporters and advisors and have developed the structure of the literacy project, you will want to begin recruiting members of the college and university community. Recruiting and promotion strategies will vary depending on the type of literacy project, but there are some general ideas that will help you. Remember that recruiting and promotion take place on an ongoing basis. When? Always. Where? Anywhere. How? Creatively and persistently.

Recruiting

This section contains basic recruiting advice. In addition, there are suggestions on how to target the various groups at your institution: students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

Convey a sense of excitement.

In general, the recruiting efforts of your group should mirror the enthusiasm and commitment that you feel towards the issue of literacy. If the people who are doing the recruiting can speak from personal experience and convey their sense of excitement about literacy work, then it becomes easier to bring other people on board. Here are some guidelines to review before you begin to recruit:

☐ *Be specific.* It is important to give people who are interested in joining you a clear picture of what is expected. If your group is involved in a tutoring project which demands a six-month commitment, be sure to let people know that right from the start. Whenever possible, provide a range of ways that people can get involved. If the project you are beginning is being organized and run on campus, let people know that they may be asked to spend some time developing the structure of the organization and helping maintain records.

☐ *Be prepared to answer questions.* Think about the questions or misconceptions you had when you first got interested in literacy. Make sure you can provide clear responses to questions like: Who is illiterate? How can a person graduate from high school and still be unable to read and write? Is there a connection between learning disabilities and illiteracy? Does everyone who has difficulty reading come from another country? Bring a one-page flyer with you when you are recruiting which addresses some of these questions and describes the various ways people can get involved in literacy work.

Recruiting is essentially storyelling.

☐ *Be excited and enthusiastic.* Recruiting is essentially storytelling. You have a message and a commitment to enable people to read. Tell about the experiences you have had, or, if you are inexperienced, about stories others have told you. Convey the message that what your group is doing is worthwhile and that you are giving people an opportunity to share in the excitement.

Be persistent. Some days you may not have much luck. People may tell you they have no time for extra projects or that their individual efforts will not make a difference. Have some answers ready. Suggest a one-time project for people who have limited time. For the people who feel that the problem is too large for individual change, remind them that helping one person to read may seem small given the number of people who have problems with literacy, but to the person who is learning to read and seeing doors open, it is not a small thing at all.

Ask people to join you.

Ask people to join you. This advice may seem obvious but it can be easy to overlook this simple and direct approach. Talk to friends, colleagues, and friends of friends. Ask for their help. People get involved because they feel strongly about an issue, because they want to learn about an issue, or because someone asked them to get involved.

Always get a name and phone number. If you have the resources, print a batch of cards that have space for a name, address, and phone number. Create a section on the bottom of the card for recruits to note the times and days they are available and any special talents or skills. Have a stack of these cards at recruiting drives and carry a few with you when you are on campus.

Recruiting ideas for everyone

In the dining halls and cafeterias. Put postcards on the tables for people to fill out and send in. Set up a table at the entrance to the cafeteria and talk to people as they wait in line. Get up on top of the tables and make announcements.

In neighboring stores, coffee houses, bookstores, laundromats, and restaurants. If your school has a lot of commuter students, they can be reached by putting up signs in the local businesses listed above. Faculty, staff, and administrators can also be recruited this way. Remember to include tear-off sheets with a phone number and contact name.

At sporting events. You have access to a stadium, arena or gym filled with people: a great captive audience. Make an announcement at halftime. Roam through the stands with flyers or arrange to have a blurb about the literacy project in the sports program.

☐ *Newsletters, newspapers, and departmental and campus bulletins.* You are working with a community that generates a lot of reading material. Try to get some coverage for the literacy project: feature articles, want ads, pictures, or cartoons.

☐ *Libraries.* Libraries and literacy are a natural fit. Place bookmarks at the check out desks; hang posters in study rooms; and display books that deal with the topic of literacy.

☐ *Radio.* Create public service and recruiting announcements for campus and local radio stations. Invite learners and tutors to participate on talk shows and interview shows.

☐ *Awareness meetings.* In the student union, libraries, or central buildings on campus, bring people together to talk about the issue and generate increased involvement.

When to recruit

Recruit early and often.

Recruit early and often. If you are recruiting people to serve as tutors, the sooner they are recruited and trained, the more time they will have to work with learners. If your institution runs on a semester system, you can recruit in the spring and do some basic orientation for tutoring that begins in the fall. When the fall classes begin, a group of people is ready to begin training.

☐ In the fall, put up tables at registration. Have a sign-up sheet and such gimmicks as balloons, buttons, or stickers to attract attention.

☐ Everybody has to wait in line the first few weeks of the semester for classes, registration, sign-ups, or sign-ins. Be there when the lines form. Hand out bookmarks to people waiting in the bookstore lines, and hand out flyers for people to read as they wait to register for class. Be persistent and creative. It is a great opportunity to recruit people and to get the word out.

☐ At some institutions, students register by mail. See if it is possible to include a flyer or a self-addressed postcard in the registration information packets.

Who to recruit

Anybody is fair game: athletes, artists, linguists, older students, computer jocks, English professors, or the chancellor. Do not limit yourself. Do not assume that "administrators would never be interested in this" or "those chemistry majors are too busy for that." Make your appeal broad-based and inclusive. Give people the opportunity to decide for themselves.

Anybody is fair game.

☐ When recruiting for tutoring projects that require year-long commitments, focus on people who live in the community or people who will be around during the summer.

☐ Some students take a semester or a year off. Faculty members go on sabbatical leave. Consider recruiting these people to work in a literacy projects. Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA), a federal program administered by ACTION, asks for a one-year commitment from volunteers who then serve in a local community organization.

☐ For projects that require a certain area of expertise or knowledge or a particular type of role model, go to the appropriate department, club, or group. People like to have their talents recognized and utilized. The student/faculty photography club can produce a photo essay documenting the activities of a local literacy project or a day in the life of an adult learner. The student jazz ensemble can play at a fundraising event or recognition dinner. The food service workers can compile recipes for use as a teaching tool for learners interested in cooking.

People like to have their talents recognized and utilized.

Where to recruit

☐ *In classes.* Ask the professor if you can make a short announcement about the program. If you are a professor, invite someone from the local literacy program—a staff member, current volunteer, or learner—to make a presentation with you or act as a guest lecturer.

☐ *At meetings of student groups.* Arrange to give a short presentation and answer questions at gatherings of student organizations, fraternities, sororities, or clubs.

☐ *In dormitories.* Work through the residential advisors, dormitory councils, or simply go door to door.

☐ *At the faculty club.* Most colleges and universities have a club for faculty members. Post signs, or, if you are a faculty member, see if you can make an announcement to your colleagues.

☐ *At staff or union meetings.* Staff meetings are a regular part of institutional life and offer a forum for discussion of issues and projects. For institutions whose workers are unionized, you can make an appeal at a union meeting. If you are a staff person who is a union member, you could petition the membership to take on a literacy project as a group.

Recruiting student organizations

As you begin to organize a literacy effort on campus, it is important to look around and see what kind of student organizations already exist on campus.

Look around and see what service programs already exist on campus.

Your first step should be to find out if there is a community service program which joins the campus to the local community. If there is a program and you are organizing the literacy project as part of that existing program, then you have some of the investigative work already accomplished. The program should know what kinds of projects match up college or university community members with the local community. The program's directors can help you make contact with projects that currently provide literacy services or that are literacy-related.

If a campus-wide service organization does not exist at your institution, then begin to look around on your own and identify student organizations. Put groups in one of two categories. One group consists of organizations that are service-oriented. Groups like this might be: a mentoring program, a support group for a battered women's shelter, or a work project in a homeless shelter.

Another group consists of organizations that focus on an area of interest or expertise. Groups in this category include: a computer club, a literary club, a theater group, or an ethnic or cultural group.

Recruiting service groups. It is important to remember that literacy work is not always separate from other kinds of social services and needs. If there are existing student service organizations on your campus, you should approach them and let them know about the plan for a literacy project. It may tie into what they are doing already. For instance, the people who are helping out at a homeless shelter may be getting requests to help fill out forms or read letters. You could put them in touch with local literacy service programs, encourage them to add a literacy project to the work that goes on at the shelter, or make presentations to the staff and clients at the shelter about the literacy services available throughout the community.

Given the proper direction and assistance, almost any group on campus can develop exciting service opportunities in the area of literacy.

Recruiting special issue groups. Given the proper direction and assistance, almost any group on campus can develop exciting service opportunities in the area of literacy. If you encourage, support, and coordinate efforts to create partnerships between literacy service providers and student organizations, you will enable the student groups to participate in an exciting program in the community. The literacy providers will benefit by getting to know students with diverse talents and abilities.

Where to start

Write an open letter to every campus organization. Describe what the literacy group is doing and invite other organizations to participate with you. Offer to attend their meetings to lead discussions about literacy and answer questions about how individual student groups can contribute to local literacy efforts.

Invite other organizations to participate with you.

Suggest some specific projects which might be of interest to a particular group. For instance, when making contact with the computer club, you could mention a local tutoring program's need for a revised database. When meeting with the video club, you could discuss the need for more video public service announcements for learner recruitment. Keep in mind that a project should be challenging and of interest to the group. It should also recognize and utilize any talents and skills the group may have to offer.

Conclude the letter by asking the student group to think about getting involved in literacy work. Enclose a questionnaire the members can fill out and send back with information on whether they would like to get involved and, if so, what they might like to do. Find out if the group is more interested in short-term or continuous involvement. This will help you match literacy providers in need with student organizations in search of projects.

Maintaining contact

Encourage the group to appoint a coordinator to maintain communication between the college or university literacy project and any local literacy programs with which it has direct contact. If your campus literacy group and the local literacy program establish a specific go-between from the beginning it will help eliminate any confusion and will promote good communication.

Recruiting faculty, staff, and administrators

The faculty, staff, and administrators of any given college or university have an enormous amount to contribute to the organization of a literacy project. If these people support, endorse and/or get involved in the project, it will truly reflect the involvement of the university community as a whole.

In the early stages of planning a literacy project, make appointments with key administrators and faculty members. Send a letter in advance outlining the ideas your group has and informing the people of what is being done. If you are making a request for something specific such as money, library space for tutoring, or released time for staff volunteers, be explicit about what you need and why you need it.

Invite people to meetings and include them in the planning of the project. Develop a wish list of things you need and see if administrators can be of assistance.

Promotion

Recruiting and promotion go hand in hand.

Recruiting and promotion go hand in hand. Promote the program, promote literacy, promote the volunteers and workers who keep the program going and, above all, recognize and promote the learners. As the literacy effort gets attention and publicity, you can tie promotion into recruiting drives.

Remember to make sure you have permission from learners to use their names or pictures in any kind of promotional event.

Remember to get permission from learners to use their names or pictures in any kind of promotional event. There have been instances where learners have lost jobs because of unwanted or unexpected exposure. "Going public" can be a difficult decision for a learner: Make sure the decision is made with encouragement and not pressure.

☐ Get black and white photographs of people involved in literacy work and send them to the school newspaper and the local papers.

☐ Ask campus people who are active in the literacy program to give an interview on local or campus radio.

☐ Make a videotape of people in the literacy program.

☐ If there are display cases in libraries and other campus buildings, put together a series of photographs, articles and quotes from people involved in the literacy project. Be sure to include a name and phone number so people can get more information.

☐ Organize a literacy awareness day, week, or month. Invite speakers to address the institution. This is a good way for adult learners in a literacy program to participate in public relations work. Encourage faculty members to incorporate the issue of literacy into classwork during the awareness period.

☐ Sponsor a slide show, video presentation, or photography exhibit focusing on literacy or the staff and learners at a community literacy project.

☐ Compile a bibliography of books and articles about literacy. Make copies available at libraries or hand them out around campus. If the librarians are willing, set aside a shelf for literacy books and information in a prominent place in the building.

☐ Sponsor an open house. If the literacy project has an office on campus, designate a couple of hours every month or every semester when people can drop in and learn about literacy.

TRAINING & SUPERVISION 8

Introduction

This chapter will give you overall advice about training and supervising literacy work, but it is *not* intended to give you a step-by-step description of how to train volunteers to work with learners. For specific advice about providing tutoring and teaching services to learners, you should consult a local educator or someone with a degree in adult education. In *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts*, you will find a listing of literacy organizations and service providers that have developed comprehensive training programs in Basic Reading and English as a Second Language. As always, there is no need to reinvent the wheel. The simplest approach is to contact the existing organizations and use their training models.

This chapter is not intended to give you a specific description of how to train volunteers to work with learners.

Training

There are three phases of training: orientation, pre-service training, and in-service training. If you are working with a local literacy program that will do the bulk of the training, remember that the academic calendar may be different from that of a community literacy project. You may want to provide some training and orientation at your institution. This insures that volunteers have been prepared for the project and helps build a feeling of camaraderie among the workers.

Orientation

Before training takes place, you should think about orientation. If you are involving volunteers in tutoring projects, the training can be quite long. An orientation session which clearly defines the expectations and requirements of the literacy project can save time and can weed out people who feel that they do not have the time.

Orientation is also helpful for people who do not necessarily want to get involved at the moment but who are interested in learning more about literacy.

A typical orientation lasts about an hour and consists of a short presentation about literacy, the training that volunteers are expected to complete, and the expectations the literacy program has of the volunteers. The rest of the time can be devoted to a question and answer session. It is helpful to hand out a flyer with a contact name and address, the training dates, and some useful facts about literacy.

Pre-service training

In training more than any other area, make use of what already exists. Creating a training program of your own is time consuming. Even if there is no local literacy program in your area, groups such as Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), Laubach Literacy Action (LLA), and the Assault on Illiteracy Project (AOIP) have training series that have been designed and tested across the country. These groups have field staff who conduct training programs nationwide. For example, the LVA Basic Reading tutor training workshop, available on videotape, gives you a measure of flexibility in scheduling trainings. Call their national office to get access to the training programs.

Holding the training sessions on campus is helpful, but do not get so isolated that you never make contact with the community.

It is possible to become certified as a tutor trainer. If you develop a corps of people on campus who can lead workshops, training tutors can be arranged in conjunction with the academic calendar.

In-service training and support

As people get involved in literacy, questions, challenges, and problems arise. Tutors especially have specific questions that need to be answered. Learners also need to be supported.

Most literacy programs have in-service seminars for tutors that focus on issues such as motivating learners, reading comprehension, adult learning disabilities, or how to use the newspaper as a teaching tool. These sessions may be held three or four times a year at the learning site or at a central location on campus.

Tutor in-service sessions can also double as recognition events or informal gatherings. As new tutors are trained, you can hold an open house for new and old tutors that also features a display of current low-level, high-interest reading materials.

Teaching someone to read is not a simple task and is not without its share of frustrations.

In addition to formal presentations, it is helpful to have a phone network that links experienced tutors with tutors who have just started in a program. Teaching someone to read is not a simple task and is not without its share of frustrations. If new tutors have an experienced contact, the chance of tutor burnout and discouragement is lessened.

A support system is also important for learners. Learning to read can be a lengthy and frustrating process. While some learners may wish to maintain anonymity, it is constructive to offer the option of contact for those who do not. If conflicts occur between a tutor and a learner, it is helpful for the learner to have a neutral third party to call. Some learners get support from a phone contact system with staff or learners who have been in the program for a year or two. Informal support groups are another way to offer the learners a chance to come together and share opinions, ideas, and concerns. Establish a follow-up system to ensure that the learners' views on program management and operation are relayed back to the staff. Strong programs incorporate learner input into as many decisions as possible.

Supervision and Support

Are the learners being taught how to read?

Supervision is an important part of any service program. Are the expectations of the volunteers being met? Are the expectations of the local literacy programs being met? Are the lines of communication open and accessible to everyone involved? Most important, are the learners being reached, assisted, and encouraged in meaningful ways? Are the learners being taught how to read?

It is necessary to make a distinction here between the kinds of supervision demanded of different tasks. If the literacy project you have initiated at your institution links with ongoing projects in the community or simply provides support services to literacy agencies, then the supervision will be less demanding. You will not be responsible for tracking the progress of learners and tutors.

If, however, you have started a literacy project which provides direct services to learners who are tutored or taught at sites on campus, then your supervisory role must increase. Learning to read is not something that can be accomplished in weeks or even months. Therefore, sustained and careful supervision of the work of the tutors and learners is essential.

Projects which work directly with local literacy programs

The amount of supervision necessary depends on what kind of project a person is involved in. If volunteers are working at local literacy programs, then the program staff should assume the role of primary supervisors. This is not to say that the people who are responsible for coordinating campus literacy efforts can completely abdicate responsibility for supervision. There are several ways to help supervise and maintain relations among the local program staff and learners, the college or university people who are working at the program, and those of you on campus who are organizing and recruiting workers.

☐ *Phone contact.* Be sure there are designated people from your institution and from the local literacy project who will serve as telephone contacts. The contacts are useful if a volunteer has a problem with the local program, if the local program cannot track down a volunteer, or if you want to invite the local program staff to a campus dinner or meeting. There should be a clear chain of communication.

☐ *Postcards.* If there are events that people should be aware of, or if meetings are scheduled for volunteers and other workers, you can send postcards to everyone on campus in addition to people at the local programs.

☐ *Group meetings.* Bring the volunteers and workers together and give them a chance to talk about what is going on, or what frustrations or successes they may have encountered in the last month or week.

☐ *Bulletin board.* If you have some office space for the literacy project or if there is a central campus building such as a cafeteria, library, or bookstore, you can arrange to have a literacy bulletin board which announces training schedules, meeting dates, and information to people in the program.

☐ *Newsletter.* Lots of literacy programs have a newsletter for volunteers, workers, and learners. You can circulate that local program's newsletter with a campus update attached.

College or university literacy programs that provide direct services to learners

A literacy program is accountable.

If you are teaching people how to read, you need to think carefully and clearly about how to maintain quality of service to the learners. You need to examine issues of responsibility. Remember that a literacy program is accountable to:

☐ *Learners* in the program.

☐ *Volunteers* involved in the literacy work.

☐ *Organizations and individuals* that provide funds to the program.

You will need to supervise all aspects of the program from volunteer and learner recruiting and orientation to recognition of learner achievement. Although there are lists of basic suggestions below, you will want to check *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts* to find information about managing and supervising literacy work. The literacy organizations that have been working with learners for years are the best source of advice and information on the subject of supervision.

Areas where supervision is especially vital:

Make sure your recruiting is realistic.

☐ *Recruiting and intake.* It is important to make sure the process of recruiting learners and volunteers proceeds smoothly. Those people who are in charge of recruiting should be prepared for questions about everything from literacy and tutor training to the state of America's public schools. Create a standard intake form for recording information about volunteers and learners. Be aware that it can become easy to promise too much too soon to both volunteers and learners. Avoid statements like "we can get you a tutor tomorrow" or "of course you can miss three of the five training sessions." Make sure your recruiting is realistic.

☐ *Training and orientation.* The people who are in charge of training and orientation should receive thorough training themselves. A good way to work with and train new trainers is to set up an apprentice system that pairs novice trainers with experienced workshop leaders.

Most literacy programs require trainees to complete two types of evaluation forms at the end of a training course. The first form is a simple set of questions about the material covered in the workshop. It is a means to evaluate whether or not the trainees are qualified to work with learners. The second form asks questions about the workshop—if the pace was too fast or too slow, if the material was clearly presented, and if the trainees have confidence in their ability to tutor. This enables the program managers to keep track of the effectiveness of the training and of the workshop leaders.

Make contact on a regular basis with learners and tutors.

☐ *Tutoring and teaching.* The supervision of teaching and tutoring is essential for any responsible program which provides direct services to learners. There should be a system in place to make contact on a regular basis with learners and tutors to ensure that progress is being made and that matches are working. Some programs administer an evaluation to learners every six months or when the learners elect to leave the program. This assessment process helps monitor learner acheivement and program effectiveness. Other programs require tutors to submit lesson plans, monthly reports of teaching activities, or time sheets.

A final suggestion for the supervision of tutoring and teaching is to have program organizers, experienced tutors, or individuals with a background in adult education sit in on a tutorial session. This should be done only after obtaining the permission of the learner. It is most effective if this kind of observation takes place a few months after the tutor and learner have been matched. That amount of time should be sufficient for rapport and trust to have developed between the two individuals.

☐ *Recordkeeping.* It is important to maintain accurate records of tutor and learner progress, of tutor and learner recruiting and intake, as well as of budget expenditures and income. By designating a small committee to take responsibility for recordkeeping from the beginning of a literacy project, you can avoid confusion in the future. Recordkeeping is of particular importance for those programs that apply for state or federal funds. Contact the local board of education for information on the forms and systems Adult Basic Education programs use to track progress.

Recordkeeping is of particular importance for those programs that apply for state or federal funds.

FUND DEVELOPMENT 9

Introduction

Assess carefully your services and your needs.

You may be involved in fundraising of one kind or another, depending on the type of literacy program you choose to organize. If your university or college is running its own program or coordinating a joint effort with other literacy programs, the first step is to assess carefully your services and your needs. If you do not know precisely what your goals are, you will have trouble recognizing all your potential resources. If your project is involved with outside agencies, on-campus needs might be fewer, but students may volunteer to help local agencies raise the funds necessary for their operations.

Before you try to raise money or any type of donations, decide what financial and physical resources you already have as well as what your needs will be. A careful program examination will help you evaluate your strengths and weaknesses; it will also help you explain your needs to potential donors. Do not forget that resources come in all forms—time, services, space and goods, as well as money—and from all over: individual donors, the university's board of trustees, administration, faculty and staff, alumni/ae, family and friends, neighbors, civic groups, businesses, state and federal funds, foundations, and the media.

Think about and write down what you need and how you can fill that need. If you want books and magazines for tutoring, you do not necessarily have to buy them. Students and other members of the community are often willing to donate books. If you need office space or use of a telephone, perhaps you can arrange to use an office or classroom at your college. If you need to pay staff members, find out about the possibility of hiring work-study students and graduate assistants. Ask the financial aid office or student employment office if it is possible to hire a student in a work-study position. Ask academic department heads if graduate assistants or fellows may be available to help you.

There is always more than one way to use a resource.

The following list reviews potential donors from large to small. It is not inclusive, but these suggestions and the attached bibliography should provide you with a starting point. The most important lesson is that there is always more than one way to use a resource. We have suggested a few ways—be creative and think of more.

Sources of Funds

Government

Federal agencies provide direct grants or direct support to student community service projects. While sources of funds and the nature of proposed grant projects may change with time, some general sources (such as the Federal Register) may help you track down appropriate agencies. The ACTION agency's Student Community Service (SCS) grants and the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) program currently sponsor literacy projects. Legislation passed in 1989 created the Student Literacy Corps. Through the Department of Education, colleges and universities may apply for grants of $25,000 over two years to fund elective literacy courses. Students enrolled in the course are required to tutor six hours every week in a community literacy program.

Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., runs a tutoring project for children who live in the Sursum Corda housing project. Adults and parents who lived in the project started to ask volunteer tutors if they could get help, too. Georgetown received an ACTION Student Service Learning grant in 1987 to begin an adult literacy project. The grant enabled Georgetown to hire a director, who is responsible for recruiting learners; recruiting, training, and placing student volunteers; and working to build community ties.

A number of states have also increased their appropriations for adult basic education, and you may qualify for state funds. Check with other colleges, national literacy contact groups, your state department of education, and local agencies for advice. You should also read the section on submitting grants to foundations and corporations below. Grants require certain obligations, like quarterly reports, and may require that your project hold appropriate liability insurance.

Since 1984, Princeton University in New Jersey has been part of a pilot program to use work-study money to support literacy efforts. In 1985-6, the student employment office targeted $4,000 in work-study funds for adult literacy projects; in 1986-7, funding was increased to $10,000. In 1986-7, through arrangements made with Community House, a social service program at Princeton, eighteen students' work-study jobs involved tutoring adults in the local library's tutoring program. Learners in the library's program include local townspeople and employees of the university who have been recruited by supervisors and union representatives.

Assistance can also come from the federal work-study programs. Students who qualify for work-study receive employment on or off campus; a part of the student's salary is paid by the hiring agency (the college or an off-campus employer) and the federal government pays the rest. The government has encouraged public service options in work-study programs andfunds up to 90 percent of a public service job (the other 10 percent is paid by the hiring agency). To facilitate such programs, institutions may use 10 percent of their college work-study job development funds to create placements in community service.

Foundations and corporations

Foundations are nonprofit organizations created to support charitable, educational, religious, and other activities for the common good. Some corporations have established their own foundations for charitable giving while others allocate funds and other gifts directly, such as equipment, space, and time from the company.

Do your homework well.

If you decide to apply for grants, do your homework well. Grantors have specific interests and may target their funds to particular issues, cities, or regions. Research potential sources of grants. Use the resources provided in this section's bibliography, the library, and local business directories. The most important resource you may have is your college's development office, which is staffed with professional fundraisers who may be more than willing to contribute their advice to your project.

A grant is not a free lunch; it is given in return for an action promised by you.

Seeking grants from any source can be a time consuming project. Before you apply for a grant, weigh the issues involved. A grant is not a free lunch; it is given in return for an action promised by you. Granting agencies demand accountability. Responsibilities can include preparing evaluations, filing reports, demonstrating expenditures, and other forms of accounting. In addition, grants cannot be renewed indefinitely; they may be helpful for seed money or for specific projects, but not to continue operations. Before you spend time working on grant proposals, ask yourself whether you can find other types of renewable resources to support your funding needs.

A number of guides give good clear advice on how to prepare a grant proposal (see bibliography at the end of this chapter). Read as much as you can about obtaining and preparing a grant application and get expert advice. Have as many critics—people unfamiliar and familiar with the project—as possible look over your proposal before you submit it.

Business

Corporations and local businesses may be able to provide a lot more than money for your project. As with grants, there are guidelines about how to approach business sources. An introduction to these procedures can be found in some of the guidebooks listed in this chapter's bibliography.

Some of the aid that businesses can provide include:

☐ *Charitable donations of funds.* Many businesses contribute regularly to a variety of causes, and do not require the same time-consuming reporting procedures as grantmaking agencies. Though these gifts are not grants, they may require some form of application. Do research about local businesses; check the Yellow Pages and talk with the Chamber of Commerce.

☐ *Donations of equipment or use of resources.* These donations are known as "gifts in kind," and come in all forms: space for tutoring and meetings, books, office equipment, computer time, and hardware. Old stationery supplies and office forms like message pads can help adult learners study functional literacy skills. Gifts-In-Kind, a branch of the United Way, can provide valuable assistance.

In one city, an advertising agency offered the state department of education a $75,000 line of credit to help create a literacy campaign in the media. Although an atypical gift, many advertising agencies, printers and typesetters may be willing to help your efforts in other ways. Contact firms that do regular business with your institution and ask if they contribute any services. If your institution's publications office is using a printer for a large job, the printer may be able to "tag on" a small job for your project at little or no cost.

☐ *Donations of time and services.* Employee expertise can provide you with invaluable assistance. Printing services and *pro bono* advertising work can help promote your effort. Educational and legal advice are always welcome. Transportation is also a help.

In Philadelphia, the evening newspaper, the Philadelphia Daily News, *prints a column for adult readers three times a week. Written at a more basic level than most newspaper stories, "The Savvy Reader" helps students of all ages understand the important news stories by providing analysis, references to other articles in the paper, and questions testing comprehension.*

☐ *Marketing or fundraising campaigns.* We are all familiar with campaigns that advertise "buy our product and we will donate one dollar to a specific charity or cause." Literacy is a particularly attractive issue for many businesses. Organized through a local retailer or manufacturer, marketing campaigns provide an excellent source of public awareness as well as funds. Approach local businesses that depend on university or college trade. Marketing campaigns are a two-way street: The business gets good publicity, increased business, and free advertising from your efforts, and you benefit from their donation.

For each paperback copy of Jonathan Kozol's Illiterate America *sold, New American Library donates a portion of the selling price to Laubach Literacy International, Literacy Volunteers of New York City, and Push Literacy Action Now.*

Why not launch a smaller scale operation through a local merchant? On one particular item or day, the store can donate one cent — or ten cents — out of every dollar earned to your campaign or to a local agency.

Employers and businesses of all types have a vested interest in the literacy of their workers and their customers. A wide variety of corporations have been involved in literacy issues. Types of businesses that have supported literacy programs include: insurance companies, banks, booksellers, publishers, newspapers, printing companies, food services and food production companies, communication companies, and computer companies.

Your institution

Universities and colleges can provide the greatest help to your efforts not only by providing endorsements and moral support but through supporting your fundraising efforts and offering gifts of time and space. Resources within the university include:

Gifts in kind

These can be the most valuable of all resources. Possibilities include:

☐ *Use of empty classrooms for teaching or tutoring*. Many colleges have vacant classrooms during the evening or off-hours when literacy tutors can meet with students.

☐ *Office space to house the administration of a literacy project.* Create a learning center or a library of materials for tutors.

☐ *Library time.* Many learners in adult literacy programs are unfamiliar with libraries. Libraries can provide quiet places to read as well as exciting places to learn about books.

☐ *Computer time and expertise.* A practical session using learning or word-processing software can be helpful for many adult students. Computer instruction can be useful in providing job and reading skills. While computer resources may be tight on many campuses, there may be some free time to introduce an adult learner to a computer. Or you may be able to arrange to use the computers in the education department, computer center, or other locations on a weekly basis.

☐ *Do not forget the two greatest gifts: time and expertise.* As mentioned, a development office can provide help with fundraising by providing reference materials, advice on grant proposals, direct mail appeals, phone-a-thons, alumni/ae appeals, and mailing lists.

In Arizona, two recent graduates of Northern Arizona University with communications experience worked together on an internship to create a PSA (public service announcement) about literacy for local television stations.

Just as businesses and community members are valuable resources, faculty, administrators, students, and staff can provide a wide range of assistance. A graduate student or faculty member may be able to help you set up a method of evaluating learner progress or program effectiveness, or lend experience to your publicity and outreach efforts.

Student funds

Disbursed through the student activities office, student government or the deans' offices, funds may be used to support public service projects in a variety of ways: covering costs for office supplies, books, tutor training, or transportation. Many college presidents control discretionary funds; a written request and a personal appeal may result in valuable operating funds.

Work-study

You can make literacy work a possibility and even a priority for work-study students.

Set up a meeting with the financial aid or student employment director to discuss work-study positions in community service. Find out how community work and on-campus jobs are funded by college work-study, and how you can make arrangements for a community or campus agency to hire a work-study student. (See *Chapter 10: Program Profiles* for examples of campuses that use work-study positions for literacy activities.) By making literacy work a possibility and even a priority for work-study students, financial aid and employment officers can make service opportunities feasible for those who work while in school.

Direct fundraising

The most common and effective fundraisers are generally the most direct. Whatever you plan, here are a few essentials:

☐ Be organized.

☐ Get dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers.

☐ Decide why you are raising funds. Why does your project need money (or other resources)? Plan how you will use the funds before you raise them.

Examples of fundraising projects that might be appropriate to literacy campaigns include the traditional standbys: raffles, dinners and parties, concerts, rummage sales, dance marathons, flower sales, and car washes. Other ideas can raise money as well as advertise your particular cause in a meaningful way.

☐ *Used textbook sales.* Create a slogan that emphasizes the connection between books and literacy: "Buy a book that makes a difference."

☐ *Coindrops near bookstore cash registers.* Make the connection between the place and the cause. In the past, the "Give the Gift of Literacy" campaign in many college bookstores across the country provided brochures and information on illiteracy and a fundraising campaign to benefit literacy agencies.

☐ *Sales of T-shirts* printed with the local literacy hotline number.

☐ *Donations from sales.* Persuade your college bookstore to donate a percentage of a day's sales to your cause. Then, make an appeal on campus and encourage everyone to buy books. Better yet, persuade your library to donate a certain day's overdue fines, and get all your friends to return their library books.

☐ *Chapter 5: Taking Action* has a number of additional fundraising ideas in the section on "Program ideas for everyone."

There are two sides to fundraising: what the donor gives you, and what you give the donor.

In all events, remember there are always two sides to fundraising: what the donor gives you, and what you give the donor. You may be receiving some valuable operating support, but you are also serving part of your mission by informing the community about illiteracy, getting others involved in the issue, and making individuals in your community feel that they can help.

Welcome and thank those who help you.

Learn from your successes and from your failures. Fundraising is hard work. Above all, be sure that you know your own needs and that you welcome and thank those who help you.

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Foundation News, published bimonthly by the Council on Foundations, 1828 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

The Grantsmanship Center NEWS, published six times per year by The Grantsmanship Center, 1031 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90015.

Grassroots Fundraising Journal, P.O. Box 14754, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Nonprofit World Report, published bimonthly by The Society for Nonprofit World Organizations, 6314 Odana Road, Suite 1, Madison, WI 53719.

The Philanthropy Monthly, published by Non-Profit Report, P.O. Box 989, New Milford, CT 06776.

Organizations

Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, 35th floor, New York, NY 10020, (212) 512-2415.

Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), 11 Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036.

Gifts-in-Kind, United Way of America, 701 North Fairfax Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314-2088.

The Grantsmanship Center, 1031 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90015.

Independent Sector, 1828 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Also see *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts*.

PROGRAM PROFILES 10

Introduction

These programs represent a range of organizational structures.

Examples of thirteen programs which involve college or university community members in literacy work are contained in this chapter. In researching and compiling the programs, an effort was made to show the variety of ways that colleges and universities are already working to increase literacy in local communities and on campuses. In addition, the programs included in this section represent a range of organizational structures from informal partnerships between individuals to specific agreements among several agencies and institutions.

The programs highlighted are:

Berea College — Located in the foothills of Appalachia, Berea College provides a community center for literacy through the Adult Ongoing Reading Program. Members of the local community as well as Berea students tutor adults from the town of Berea and its environs.

Boston University —The Intergenerational Literacy Project is a comprehensive program run by the Boston University School of Education and the community of Chelsea, Massachusetts. The project utilizes the resources of both the university and the community so adult learners and their children can improve their literacy skills.

Brevard Community College —The Brevard program is an example of how a community college has worked to provide Adult Basic Education and basic skills classes for an entire county through an "Open Campus" system.

Mary Baldwin College —Mary Baldwin College's literacy project is an informal partnership between the college and a local correctional facility.

Northwestern University —The Literacy Committee of the Northwestern Volunteer Network, a student-run program, places undergraduate tutors in six Basic Reading and English as a Second Language projects throughout Chicago and Evanston.

Regis College— The Office of Experiential Education at Regis College coordinates a program which links undergraduates with a local literacy program. Students participate in a seminar which connects their literacy work with reflection and academic research.

Rice University — Rice University offers a number of volunteer opportunities in literacy programs that focus on adult and teenage new readers through the Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP).

State University of New York , College at Oswego — Literacy Volunteers of Oswego is an example of how a college can set up a chapter of a national volunteer literacy organization.

Stanford University —The Stanford Latino Literacy Project (SLIP) is an English as a Second Language program which provides tutorial services to workers and managers at the university.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill — Project Literacy is a student-run program which offers tutoring to UNC-Chapel Hill employees, works with intergenerational literacy projects, and provides support to local Adult Basic Education classes.

University of Pennsylvania — At the University of Pennsylvania, a commitment to literacy is reflected in the efforts of the president, faculty members at the School of Education as well as undergraduates who work as tutors.

VISTA volunteer, Michael MacKillop — Michael MacKillop, a recent college graduate, serves as a VISTA volunteer at a statewide literacy

Berea College

Prepared by Aleeza Strubel
Cornell University, Class of 1993

Madison County, Kentucky, has the highest illiteracy rate in the country.

Madison County, Kentucky, has the highest illiteracy rate in the country. When the local assistance services were unable to meet the community's literacy needs, Students for Appalachia (SFA), a community service organization at Berea College, developed the Adult Ongoing Reading Program. After receiving several requests for tutors, David Sawyer, the director of SFA, and Mary Roenker, a student, decided to take on the challenge of developing an adult learning center for the community.

Because of its rural setting, Berea College does not have easily accessible community literacy agencies with which to work. Therefore, the task of developing a tutoring program was taken on completely by SFA. These tasks included securing the funds to purchase an adult reading textbook series, developing a drop-in resource center, recruiting both adult learners and volunteer tutors, and involving the local community in all of these efforts.

The mission was not to create community service work for college students; it was to meet a stated need within the surrounding community. For this reason, SFA recruited community members as well as Berea students to serve as tutors. An article written in the local newspaper on SFA's literacy program attracted many tutors, and SFA volunteers met with a senior citizens' group to recruit additional volunteers. Faculty and staff learned of the program through an article that appeared in the school newspaper. According to Sawyer, "It is not enough to start a literacy program; good management is needed. One weakness among student volunteers is that enthusiasm tends to be stronger in the beginning of a new program. That is why we have also recruited volunteers from the Berea faculty, staff, and community. We train them at the college, but the bulk of our tutors are not students. We run a literacy program, not a student literacy project."

Sawyer and Roenker, the Berea student who serves as the literacy program coordinator, researched various literacy materials until an appropriate curricula was found. The cost of the tutoring materials was funded by several sources including donations from the spouses of the Berea Board of Trustees, a foundation grant, and money from the

Kentucky Board of Education. The college provided in-kind support by renovating and donating 4,000 square feet of unused space to SFA. Part of the space is used for a computer lab and tutoring space.

Support is provided on an ongoing basis because of the college's unique tradition of labor, learning and service.

Support is also provided on an ongoing basis because of the college's unique tradition of labor, learning and service. Students do not pay tuition to attend Berea College; instead they fulfill a labor requirement. Students choose from a variety of jobs which include working on campus or for local businesses. Staff positions at SFA are considered part of the labor program although most of the student organizers do voluntary service in addition to their labor requirement.

The Adult Ongoing Reading Program currently has fifteen adult learners matched with tutors. Tutors meet regularly in a support group setting to discuss problems as they develop, and to share their experiences. In-service training ensures the quality of the experience for the volunteers, and maintains stability for the adult learners. Some long-term SFA goals include developing a system that will be used to evaluate the learners on an ongoing basis, organizing a local advisory council for the program, and hiring a part-time administrator who is also a certified literacy trainer.

One Berea student, Jeanette Humphrey, has tutored two adult learners through the SFA program. Her experience with the literacy program is reflected in this note from David Sawyer:

> "I recall vividly the joy and admiration I felt for Jeanette Humphrey when I opened the note that read, 'David, I called Robert Issacs! I'm gonna do it!' I saved that note, which I felt reflected a special courage and spirit of service.
>
> A week or two earlier a call had come into the offices of Students for Appalachia from the aunt of a seventeen-year old backwoods boy who had decided to come down off the mountain into a broader world he had barely glimpsed. Robert Issacs had never been to school and now wanted to read and write, to get a driver's license, to learn. His family is part of a fiercely independent and patriarchal Appalachian clan, who, because of deep religious convictions, never send their children to the public schools.

Jeanette had been mulling this situation over for a while, wondering if Robert should be referred somewhere else, and, secretly, I suspect, whether she or any SFA tutor could properly handle such an assignment. It would a challenge for any tutor, and to up the ante, mountain folks are not known for their liberal views on women's place in society. Jeanette is female. . . . and black. There were more than words in her note!"

Working with Robert Issacs was a challenge for Jeanette. Robert's thirst for knowledge was met by Jeanette's hard work and commitment. Robert left the mountains to live in Cincinnati, where he has continued his studies. He and Jeanette have kept in touch with each other. The ambition and dedication that Robert displayed amazed Jeanette. "I have been spoiled by tutoring adults. There is a noticeable difference from young kids. They made me feel great, that I was important to them. They also made me feel confident. It is easy to see an improvement. It made me feel like, 'Wow, I must be doing something right!' "

I have been given a whole new way to think about what service means.

In addition to coordinating the project, Roenker also works as a tutor. The experience has been a growing one for her. "Working with adult learners has helped me to find out what my own inadequacies are. There is something very misleading about the word 'service.' People think that it means only to help others, and that it is done in a missionary spirit, that it is only for people who are 'less fortunate.' That is not how it works. My experience has helped me to grow in every way, emotionally and spiritually; it has helped me in both a personal and academic sense. I have been given a whole new way to think about what service means. It is definitely a two way street, and I am realizing I gain far more than I give in serving others."

For more information, contact:

Mary Roenker, Coordinator, Adult Ongoing Reading Program
David Sawyer, Director, Students for Appalachia
Students for Appalachia, CPO 1842
Berea College
Berea, KY 40404
Phone: (606) 986-9341

Boston University

The project seeks to break the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy by providing parents with literacy instruction.

The Intergenerational Literacy Program is a unique collaboration between the community of Chelsea, Massachusetts, and the Boston University School of Education. The project seeks to break the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy by providing parents with literacy instruction. The teaching is aimed at both improving their ability to use literacy in ways that will enrich their own lives. At the same time, the program encourages parents to share ideas and suggestions for reading and writing with their children as one way of preparing their children for a successful school experience.

Recent research supports a strong link between the home environment and children's reading achievement. Specifically, home practices such as reading together and reading aloud, making a variety of print materials available, and promoting positive attitudes toward literacy, have been identified as having a significant impact on children's literacy learning. In homes where parents possess minimal literacy skills, these types of literacy activities are unlikely to occur, providing fewer learning opportunities for young children prior to entering school, and less support and assistance in correcting problems that may occur after they enter school. As a result, children of parents with marginal literacy skills are often at greater risk for school failure, and become victims of an intergenerational cycle of illiteracy.

Chelsea is a community hard hit by some of society's most difficult issues. Fifty-six percent of the adults in Chelsea have not received a high school diploma. The community has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in Massachusetts, and most of these teen parents have not been awarded a high school diploma. More than fifty percent of children in third grade perform significantly below grade level, revealing a substantial incidence of reading disability among children.

The Program — Working with both parents and children

In 1989-90, the Intergenerational Literacy Program served a total of 203 individuals from 66 families. The program is directed by Dr. Jeanne Paratore, Associate Professor of Education at Boston University, and co-directed by Janis Rennie, Chelsea Public School Director of Elementary Curriculum. Adults attend literacy classes three to four days a week and are taught by certified and experienced literacy teachers. In addition, learners receive individualized instruction from literacy tutors who work under the direct supervision of a literacy teacher. While parents attend class, children participate in a free child care program supervised by a graduate student from the School of Education, who is assisted by a team of four undergraduate students.

The objectives of the program are to:
☐ measurably improve literacy skills of participating adults;
☐ measurably improve literacy skills of their children;
☐ conduct research on the effectiveness of a language-based approach to adult literacy.

Boston University is administering the instructional program during a two-year development phase, directing activities, hiring and training instructional staff, and collecting evaluative data on the effectiveness of the program. At the end of the first two years the project administration will gradually shift to an existing adult basic education facility that will be identified with the help of the Literacy Coalition of Chelsea. This shift in administration will ensure that the program becomes a long-term institutionalized option for the Chelsea community. Because an administrative staff will already be in place at the adult education facility, this agreement guarantees that after a two-year period of initial development the amount of money spent on administrative costs will diminish with more dollars spent on direct service to learners and their children, thus permitting more people to be served.

Community collaboration

Numerous agencies and organizations within the Chelsea community are involved in aspects of the Intergenerational Literacy Program.

Numerous agencies and organizations within the Chelsea community are involved in aspects of the Intergenerational Literacy Program, from providing space for tutoring sessions to recruiting adult learners and their children. The Chelsea collaborators include: the Adult Basic Education program; the Literacy Coalition of Chelsea; the Public Library; the Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee; the Chelsea Housing Bureau; directors of Guidance and Elementary Curriculum in the schools; an adolescent community parent program; and the Salvation Army and other community agencies.

The Chelsea public school system plays an active role in the program. Elementary and secondary teachers and administrators assist in the recruitment effort by designing the program announcement, and distributing information to target families through kindergarten and

Students keep a daily journal of stories read, viewed and heard in the home.

first grade teachers, and directors of guidance, Elementary Curriculum, Chapter 1 and bilingual education. In addition, in the case of school-aged children, teachers encourage students to keep a daily journal of stories read, viewed and heard in the home. Children are given opportunities to share their journals with teachers and classmates.

The Adult Basic Education Program of Chelsea shares instructional space for the program. In addition, the director of Adult Basic Education serves as coordinator of the evening program and assists in instructional planning, data collection, and project evaluation.

Other neighborhood groups and organizations are involved in the following ways:
☐ Choice thru Education, an organization which serves adolescents, and Project Affirm, a program at Chelsea High School, assists in the recruitment of teen parents. In addition, Choice thru Education provides instructional and child care space within its facility.
☐ Chelsea clergy assist in recruiting clients and encourage their parishioners who are able readers and writers to join the program as literacy tutors.
☐ The Salvation Army provides a neighborhood site for three instructional classes as well as fully equipped child care space.
☐ The Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee and the Early Childhood Advisory Committee assist in recruiting and maintaining families.
☐ The Director of Tenants' Service for the Chelsea Housing Bureau assists in recruiting families.
☐ The Chelsea Public Library provides a library card to each parent and child and lends books on a long-term basis to the three instructional sites.

Evidence of success

The program's achievements are evident:
☐ Sixteen families completed the first instructional cycle; 28 families completed the second cycle; and 47 families completed the third cycle.
☐ Two parenting teens earned six academic credits toward high school graduation.
☐ One parenting teen earned three academic credits.
☐ The average daily attendance rate is 74 percent, which surpasses national averages.
☐ The program attrition rate is only 15 percent.

☐ Steady and systematic increases in the use of literacy in the home setting is supported by data from thirteen families during April 1990.

Funding for the program is provided by a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education, FIRST Initiative, the College Work-Study Program, the Massachusetts Department of Education, and Xerox Corporation.

For more information, contact:

Jeanne R. Paratore, Director
Janis Rennie, Co-Director
Intergenerational Literacy Program
Boston University School of Education
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
Phone: (617) 353-2699

Brevard Community College

A literacy program serving thousands of individuals in a single county.

Brevard Community College is a model of how a community college can run literacy programs serving thousands of individuals. Under the leadership of Dr. Maxwell C. King, the college is committed to increasing literacy in Cocoa County. In 1982, Brevard took over the local adult education program that had been run by the Cocoa County school district. As Dean Elizabeth Singer recalls, "The president told me: 'Literacy is a first priority. We want to reach everyone in this community.' " Brevard's efforts have been so successful that the Florida state legislature selected the college in 1987 as one of four community colleges to serve as Model Centers for Adult Literacy.

Brevard's adult education program is run through the Open Campus, a division of the college that also offers continuing education and community education courses at a number of sites throughout Cocoa County. The adult education program offers both an Adult Basic Education (ABE) and a high-school completion/GED program for adults. Special classes are available for the learning disabled. The ABE program alone serves between 4,000-5,000 adults each term. All together, there are between 10,000-15,000 participants in the adult education program every year.

Brevard hires professional teachers to teach classes in the adult education division. Dean Singer trains many of the ABE teachers herself; GED teachers are certified by the state. Volunteers from the local Laubach Literacy council teach in the program. Brevard faculty members also provide assistance by offering in-service workshops to teachers and tutors on topics such as classroom management and curriculum. In addition, work-study students enrolled in Brevard's traditional academic program have taught in the adult education program.

Brevard works in cooperation with a variety of other local agencies to recruit students and meet their needs. Adult literacy classes are located at schools, churches, and other sites in local communities. The local housing authority, for example, has provided free use of several teaching sites.

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Donation of bus service has made it possible for learners who have completed ABE classes to come to Brevard's main campus for vocational testing and placement. Further solutions to the transportation problem have evolved through a loan agreement withthe Board of County Commissioners. The county has provided an 18-seat bus which the college uses to pick up special needs students and transport them to the Cocoa Campus. In the southern part of the county, an agreement with the City of Melbourne provides taxi service to outreach and adult learning centers. In the northern end of the county, Bethlehem Baptist Church, which has a child care center and educational facilities, agreed to provide its bus for transportation of students and the college's Open Campus offers parenting and ABE classes onsite at the church. The college also pays the bus driver and reimburses the church for gas mileage.

At the heart of Brevard's successful efforts is a corps of ABE Teacher-Recruiter-Counselors (TRCs). The TRCs work in local communities to recruit and retain students in the literacy program. TRCs come from the communities where they serve and are chosen for their knowledge and experience in community work. During 1989-90, four TRCs and three teacher aides conducted seventeen outreach classes, serving 196 students performing academically below the sixth grade level.

Part of Brevard's work is supported by state allocation of federal ABE funding and the remainder is paid for by the college itself. Brevard has been active in creating demonstration projects through a program that ensures that 10 percent of federal monies designated for literacy be allocated for special demonstration projects and teacher training models. One of the most important of these model projects has been Basic Education Skills Through Parent Affective Learning (BEST-PAL), a parenting education program for local communities. A fundamental goal of BEST-PAL is to provide basic reading and writing instruction in its parenting classes. Some of the parents involved in the program are illiterate to some degree. The Teacher-Recruiter-Counselors (TRCs) can work with parents not only to build parenting skills but to encourage parents to enroll in literacy programs. With the advent of family literacy programs and lack of parenting materials suited to adults with reading problems, New Readers Press worked with Dean Singer and Yvette Zgonc, one of the original writers of BEST-PAL, to highlight the project in a publication "Let's Work It Out: Topics for Parents."

The BEST-PAL program provides parents with learning guides (on such topics as love and affection, family crisis, and sex education) that are easy to understand because they have clear pictorials and easy reading levels. In class, teachers help parents build their reading vocabulary and writing skills. BEST-PAL has not only helped Brevard recruit students for adult literacy programs; according to Dean Singer, "It has been a great way to recruit for the college." Students who might not have considered returning to school for a college degree are encouraged by TRCs in the parenting program to pursue their education.

Brevard increased its involvement in recruiting, counseling and placement through the Center for Adult Literacy, which was funded by a state lottery and opened in the fall of 1987. The Center works closely with the college's other divisions to strengthen literacy programs throughout the county.

In coordination with Brevard's Center for Adult Literacy, a Student Literacy Corps- Literacy Involvement Program (LIP) was created in March 1990 under a special federal grant and operates under the umbrella of Campus Compact, a Brevard community service organization. The major focus of LIP is to recruit, train, place, and support at least 200 college students in literacy service learning programs. Fifty percent serve as "High Motivation Need" (at-risk) youth mentors, while fifty percent tutor adults in basic skills. One of the program's major goals is to maximize student and community benefit through uniting literacy volunteer work and the college curriculum.

Brevard Community College's Open Campus demonstrates diversity in its offering a wide range of adult literacy services. The Open Campus serves more than 50,000 adults and children and when combined with the college's academic and vocational certificate programs, it represents the true spirit and purpose of a community college.

For more information, contact:

Elizabeth Singer, Dean
Adult / Continuing Education
Brevard Community College
Cocoa, FL 32922
Phone: (407) 632-1111 ext. 3180

Mary Baldwin College

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

Week after week, students from Mary Baldwin College (MBC) return to the Staunton Correctional Facility to provide supplemental tutorial assistance for a number of prison inmates. Unlike many literacy volunteers, Mary Baldwin students do not participate in a structured literacy or community service program; rather, they work through an arrangement made between David Carey, an MBC professor of sociology, and Richard Massey, the school principal at the prison.

According to Massey, in the late 1970s, an MBC student interested in adult literacy approached Professor Carey and asked about tutoring possibilities in the Staunton area. Carey proceeded to contact Massey and arranged for the student to spend time volunteering at the correctional facility. Since then, other MBC students who have shown an interest in tutoring have done so through Professor Carey's connection with Mr. Massey. As Massey points out, "It is strictly ad hoc between the professor and myself. If we structure it more, we'll be less productive."

"It is strictly ad hoc between the professor and myself."

Throughout the years, the number of tutors involved in the arrangement has ranged from as few as one to as many as five. The time commitment the students make varies from one individual to another. Usually, a tutor will commit a semester at a time and work a couple of hours each week. Some MBC students tutor as part of an independent study assignment or other school-related project and are eligible to receive credit for their work.

Since the prison runs a school attended by 100 of its 550 inmates, most of the material with which tutors work complements the learner's regular class work. The teachers at the prison school administer the tutor training, provide supervision, and consult with the volunteers on the progress of the learners. Students can tutor one-to-one with an inmate or help in the classroom during regular class times. To be tutored by an MBC student is a kind of reward: prison teachers choose those inmates who put forth the greatest amount of effort in the classroom. Massey points out that the inmates look forward to their tutoring sessions and to contact with "the visitors from the outside."

"Kay was not only my tutor, but also my friend."

Learner Linwood Herring speaks positively of his experience with an MBC tutor. "I really enjoyed working with Kay [tutor]. We worked mostly on reading; we would read together—she'd read a portion of the book and then I'd read. If I had trouble pronouncing a word she'd help me and if I came to a word that I didn't know, we'd look it up and write it down." Herring knows that the twice-weekly tutoring sessions helped him with his reading skills but, he points out that Kay "was not only my tutor, but also my friend. She has a nice personality and I really enjoyed working with her."

For more information, contact:

Richard Massey
Principal
Staunton Correctional Center
P.O. 3500
Staunton, VA 24401
Phone: (703) 332-7500

Northwestern University

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

In 1985, Jonathan Kozol, author of *Illiterate America*, spoke at Northwestern University. He not only spoke; he inspired many students with his emotional appeal for a literate America. Several students in the audience then invited the director of Literacy Volunteers of Chicago to speak on campus about how students could give their time as volunteer tutors. By 1986, Northwestern students had developed Organization Working for a Literate Society (OWLS). The program, conceived and established by students, organizes regular tutor training programs, provides tutor placement services, and works to increase awareness about the literacy issue. The program is now known as the Literacy Committee of the Northwestern Volunteer Network.

In 1989-90, the Literacy Committee recruited more than fifty Northwestern students to tutor adult learners in both Basic Reading and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. The program operates in conjunction with six literacy providers in Evanston and Chicago, including Evanston Township High School, the Korean American Senior Center, the Cambodian Association, the Southeast Asian Center, the Howard Area Community Center, and Prologue—an alternative high school program associated with Literacy Volunteers of Chicago.

Students are recruited through ads in the campus newspaper, volunteer activity fairs and word of mouth. Most students use public transportation to get to the tutoring sites although the project has access to a university car. Once every quarter, the tutors meet with their student site director to discuss the problems and successes they encounter during tutoring sessions. The tutors are also encouraged to attend meetings of the Northwestern Volunteer Network so that they can be informed of overall community involvement at the university. The Literacy Committee receives operational support and office space as part of the Northwestern Volunteer Network. In addition, the project has been allocated about $300 this year through the student government for training materials and advertising.

Once every quarter, tutors meet with their student site director to discuss the problems and successes they encounter during tutoring sessions.

Northwestern students who are interested in working with Basic Reading learners participate in a tutor training program at Prologue. When the volunteers have completed a one session intensive training course, they are matched with adult learners. Prologue then supervises the three tutoring sessions which are held for three hours each. The one-to-one tutoring sessions complement the regular course work of the adult learners. The Prologue training session combines the standard training techniques with new ones geared to the specific needs of the Northwestern/Prologue program.

Many students choose to work with adults whose knowledge of English is limited.

Many Northwestern students choose to work with adults whose knowledge of English is limited. ESL training takes place on campus and is directed by Shari Fenton, the Children's Program Coordinator for the Cambodian Association of Illinois. Tutors and learners are matched by contacts at the individual literacy providers and student organizers of the Literacy Committee. The tutoring sessions take place once a week for approximately two hours in community centers throughout Evanston and Chicago.

The Literacy Committee offers other volunteer opportunities for Northwestern students interested in literacy. For the past three years, the Committee has organized Literacy Power Week. Aimed at raising awareness and recruiting volunteers, the week includes a poetry and prose reading designed to demonstrate the power of words. Students and local performance artists read selections written by adult learners and also invite poetry majors to read original poems. The week also features speakers on literacy, a book drive for several local and international literacy programs, and a movie on an education-related topic.

For more information, contact:

Kristina Halovanic, Chairperson
Literacy Committee of NVN
Northwestern Volunteer Network
Northwestern University
1999 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60208
Phone: (708) 491-7610

Regis College

Prepared by Aleeza Strubel
Cornell University, Class of 1993

Regis College has developed a project that combines volunteer service, academic work, career exploration, and an opportunity to act on the mission of the college.

"To engage Regis College students in a literacy-based community service program, to address the literacy problem in the Denver metropolitan area, and to heighten (students') sense of social responsibility." With these goals for the Community Service Internship Program (CSIP), Regis College has developed a project that combines volunteer service, academic work, career exploration, and an opportunity to act on the mission of the college.

CSIP was developed in 1987 by Lynne Montrose, director of the Regis office of Experiential Education, and Sister Cecilia Linnenbrink, a former instructor at Regis College. The program, which is open to all students with a minimum grade point average of 2.0, attracts students from a wide range of academic disciplines. Students are able to develop their career skills while providing service to the community. The CSIP has two components: service and learning. Upon completion of 120 hours in one semester, the students receive three hours of college credit in their major area of study. Students may choose to receive elective credit with a smaller time commitment.

The first area of the literacy internship concerns the students' work at the Adult Learning Source (ALS), an agency that works in the metropolitan Denver area to provide literacy assistance to adults with low level skills. Each student spends a total of ten hours a week working at ALS. They serve as literacy tutors, working one-to-one with an adult learner, and also on a personal project that is related to their major. These projects are designed to meet some of the agency's needs as a nonprofit organization, while at the same time to provide the student with hands-on experience. The projects have included a pre-law student developing ALS' testimony for the Colorado state legislature; an education major helping ALS revise its GED curriculum; and a child development major designing a program for children of adult learners.

The second aspect of CSIP is a seminar that focuses on literacy and related issues. The syllabus includes reading Jonathan Kozol's

Illiterate America; attending literacy training sessions at ALS; participating in three seminars that deal with the psychology, economics, and sociology of illiteracy; and synthesizing the seminars, reading, and experiences as a tutor at ALS into two reflection papers. During the semester, students attend informal evaluation and progress meetings led by Regis professors and program coordinators to share information and provide support to each other. The students receive a grade from the participating professors for their coursework. In the past, the course has been taught by professors from the history and religion departments and an administrator from the student life division.

Thirty-five students participated in the program during the 1988-89 school year, and 104 students during the 1989-90 year. Montrose is working now to make the internship a campus-wide initiative. By working with dormitory residents, student activity groups, athletic programs, and members of student government, she is hoping to fulfill Regis' Jesuit mission and involve all students in service. Shari Marquez, a 1989 Regis graduate, participated in CSIP and looks at the experience as a "real eye-opener." stating "It left me frustrated and angry that something like this could go on in our society," she said. "But it opens up a part of you and makes you more sensitive to the needs of others."

For more information, contact:

Lynne Montrose, Director
Office of Experiential Education
Regis College
West 50th Avenue and Lowell Boulevard
Denver, CO 80221-1099
Phone: (303) 458-1809

Rice University

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

Jim Mustacchia, an initiator of Rice University's literacy project, remembers that efforts to start the program "called for creativity." In the fall of 1986, Mustacchia, the initial coordinator of the Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP) and a 1985 Rice graduate, worked with other Rice students interested in the literacy issue to establish the program. Currently, more than 220 Rice students work with adult English-speaking non-readers, Spanish-speaking employees, refugees, and children.

More than 220 Rice students work with adult English-speaking non-readers, Spanish-speaking employees, refugees, and children.

Rice students who tutor adult non-readers volunteer with the campus-based Rice Adult Literacy Project of Houston (RALPH). Students complete a six-hour training session, and then are matched with adult learners recruited through the Houston READ Commission, the umbrella organization for literacy in Houston. The twice-weekly, one-to-one sessions are held at the Rice library or at a neighborhood public library. The Rice Adult Literacy Program offers to reimburse learners for transportation to campus tutoring sites. The program also has funding to purchase bus passes and subscriptions to newspapers for adult learners. Although it is flexible, the program is RSVP's most demanding volunteer opportunity. The program calls for a minimum one-year commitment. During the summer months, Rice staff people and students who are in Houston are trained as substitute tutors.

For those students interested in English as a Second Language, Rice offers tutoring opportunities with the local YMCA Refugee Assistance Program and with a campus-based Employee Tutoring Program. The Refugee Assistance Program gives students the chance to teach English to a class or small group of refugees who have recently arrived in the United States. The tutors are trained and supervised by staff members of the YMCA International Services project.

The Employee Tutoring Program, established by the Rice community service director, links Spanish-speaking employees with Rice student tutors. RSVP worked with the Physical Plant and Food and Housing divisions on campus to recruit adult learners for the program. Hector Urrutebeheity, a professor in the Spanish, Portuguese and Classics Department trains the volunteers. The staff and students meet once or twice each week during the employees' lunch hour. The tutors and learners use commercially developed English as a Second Language materials as well as lessons created by the tutors.

In collaboration with Houston Independent School District's Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPs), students have created a number of youth tutoring programs with elementary, junior and high schools. Once or twice a week, a group of Rice students drive borrowed vans to local schools or bring the kids to campus for afternoon tutoring. Throughout the semester, the students mix lessons with field trips, picnics and parties.

Finally, RSVP offers short-term literacy tutoring. For example, in 1989 the Texas Department of Health instituted a test which Department of Health employees were required to pass in order to keep their jobs. A group of Rice students tutored employees of a nursing home in the Texas Medical Center in preparation for the upcoming exam. After five months of tutoring the exam was administered and the formal tutoring sessions ended. Several of the student/employee tutoring pairs have continued their work following the exam.

Rice offered a one-credit class that focused on the problem of illiteracy at the local and national level.

In 1987 Rice offered a one-credit class that focused on the problem of illiteracy at the local and national level, and strove to increase student awareness of and participation in the issue. The curriculum included presentations by local leaders in the literacy movement, a study of existing teaching methods and an examination of the political and sociological ramifications of literacy. An underlying focus of the class was student reactions to the literacy issue. The class allowed students to examine the implications of their literacy work from various perspectives. One coordinator pointed out, "Literacy tutoring is a personal commitment that requires students to reflect."

Funding for Rice's literacy projects is raised from a variety of sources. Grants from Southwestern Bell and Exxon help defray the costs of a literacy library and other materials for tutors and learners. With a grant from the Houston READ Commission, RSVP was able to hire a student to coordinate literacy work during the 1989-90 academic year. In 1990-91, college work-study funds will be used to support the student literacy coordinator. Texas business leader H. Ross Perot donated the honoraria he received for speaking at Rice to the RSVP literacy projects.

In addition to cash grants, RSVP has been successful in garnering in-kind support from the community. Two executives from the advertising firm of Ogilvy and Mather donated their time to create a publicity campaign for the literacy project. They designed and produced four different flyers for tutor recruitment and fundraising.

An important aspect of the Rice literacy program is the relationship between Rice and the Houston community.

An important aspect of the Rice literacy program is the relationship between Rice and the Houston community. Rice University is a member of the Houston READ Commission, which works with thirteen other local literacy service programs. The Rice student who coordinates the literacy projects serves on the Commission's advisory board and acts as link between the campus and city-wide literacy initiatives. Through these collaborations between the university and the community, more people have become involved in the literacy issue, and, as a result, more non-readers have received the instruction and attention they need. The organizations associated with the READ Commission provide RSVP with such resources as training sessions, materials, tutoring sites, and learners. The READ Commission provides access to and communication with the Houston community.

Rice is also involved with regional and national efforts to increase student involvement in literacy projects. Rice was the site of a 1987 regional conference on student involvement in literacy organized by the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) and Campus Compact and funded by ACTION, the federal domestic volunteer agency. The meeting included students and administrators from Louisiana, Kentucky, Texas and Oklahoma and focused on presentations from adult learners, workshops on literacy program models, and examinations of current tutoring techniques. Elaine Watkins, the student contact for literacy programs, is a board member of the Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE).

For more information, contact:

Elaine Watkins, Literacy Coordinator
Paul Winkler, Director of RSVP
Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP)
Rice University
Office of Student Activities , P.O. Box 1892
Houston, TX 77251
Phone: (713) 527-4970, 527-6044

Stanford University

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

"I didn't have to do much of a selling job," says Pedro Castañeda, referring to the adult literacy program he initiated at Stanford University in 1986. And it is no surprise—his program proposal was precisely what university managers and employees needed to fill the communication gap separating them. The Stanford Literacy Improvement Project (SLIP) focuses on the development of effective workplace communication skills between mostly non-native English-speaking employees and English-only speaking managers, as well as other co-workers. A collaboration between the maintenance and service departments at Stanford and El Centro Chicano (a cultural activities center at Stanford), the program helps foster better workplace relations between the managers and employees through language instruction. Some managers receive Spanish language training and employees receive English language training.

The program helps foster better workplace relations between managers and employees.

Tutors in this program are drawn from Stanford faculty, staff and students. Service department managers and employees are the learners in the program. These include employees from food services and housekeeping as well as janitors and grounds keepers. Currently, SLIP serves 55 university employees on campus and 35 learners off campus. The program includes both individualized tutoring as well as small group instruction. One course also has been developed for clerical personnel interested in improving their reading and writing skills.

Since the tutoring is geared toward improving "workplace communication skills," tutors must familiarize themselves with the responsibilities of employees and managers as well as the rules and regulations by which the managers and employees work. From this information and from basic on-the-job observation, tutors compile a list of work specific language which is then used as instructional material. Language textbooks are also used, complementing the work-oriented materials. Tutors also are provided with an eighty-page tutor training packet designed to enhance their tutoring. The packet was developed by Pedro Castañeda and Winston Wheeler, the SLIP assistant director. The Stanford School of Education also offers two tutor training seminars each quarter.

In addition to Spanish language training, managers participate in special workshops designed to familiarize them with cultural issues that may facilitate effective communication.

Tutors and learners meet twice a week, one hour per session, primarily in the dining halls on campus. One hour of instruction is on work time and the second hour is on the employee's own time. All instruction activities are coordinated through El Centro Chicano where some tutoring also takes place. The center operates under the student affairs office and provides academic support, cultural programs for both students and community members, and an environment for cultural activity. As a result, it is a crossroads for students and community members and serves as an ideal language learning environment. Castañeda notes that, "It gets the workers out of the working environment and enables them to put themselves into a different state of mind." He adds that since both workers and employees are language students, a sort of equality exists that allows them to interact with one another on terms other than their working relationship.

"It gets the workers out of the working environment and enables them to put themselves into a different state of mind."

Two literacy courses are taught off campus in East Palo Alto. The courses are focused on English and civics instruction for people seeking amnesty under the U.S. immigration laws. A minimum of 40 hours of instruction is required by the government to establish permanent residency. Basic teaching materials and curriculum are provided by the U.S. Department of Naturalization and Immigration. The course is taught by a Stanford student majoring in Spanish and Portuguese. At the end of the course, the learners receive certificates of completion to be used in interviews with immigration officials.

The program is funded by approximately seven different organizations, including the United Stanford Worker's Union, University service and maintenance departments, and the student government. Castañeda receives funding from Stanford for his coordination and has managed to get some money to pay a recent graduate to do administrative work. As previously mentioned, El Centro Chicano provides some of the materials used in the program and is a tutorial site. The English department also provides English books for more advanced readers.

In addition to the director and assistant director, SLIP is staffed by a work-study student and a local high school student. The work-study student spends ten hours a week on clerical work and special projects.

The current project involves editing a collection of stories written by high school students from migrant worker families. A senior from Menlo Atherton High School serves at SLIP through Stanford's Youth Opportunities Program. The program is funded by the university and offers campus job placements for talented high school students. The student does clerical work and translates from English to Spanish such documents as the employees' work contracts.

Although the program has been successful, there have been obstacles to overcome. Castañeda reports the biggest problem that planners and participants encountered was tutoring schedules. Because the tutors and workers have strict schedules to follow, coordinating meeting times is difficult. To overcome this difficulty, the SLIP assistant director focused his time at the beginning of each quarter on overseeing the scheduling. The schedule remains fairly constant once it is in place for the quarter. There was also some difficulty with the tutor training. However, this has been overcome by the development of the tutor-training package which provides the volunteers with everything they need to tutor. The program has also produced three texts based on the information provided by the employee learners.

The attitudes of the employees have improved immensely both toward their work and toward themselves.

The initial results of the Stanford Literacy Improvement Project have been exciting. The attitudes of the employees have improved immensely both toward their work, and, more important, toward themselves. According to Castañeda, this new attitude gives the employees the initiative to seek out opportunities for themselves. "For the first time, they [the employees] feel like the University is making an effort to provide them with some type of benefit other than their pay check," Castañeda said. As a result, workplace attitudes have improved and productivity levels have increased. More important, an understanding between workers and managers has been created. As one manager says, "I finally realized the true personality of one of my employees. Before the project, this employee was dormant."

For more information, contact:

Pedro Castañeda, Project Director
Stanford Literacy Improvement Project
El Centro Chicano, Building 590-H
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305
Phone: (415) 725-0327

State University of New York, College at Oswego

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

From the outset, Literacy Volunteers of Oswego County has joined together the local and college communities in an effort to promote adult literacy. Work began in June 1984 when the Student Association President of the State University of New York, College at Oswego (SUNY Co Oswego) became interested in establishing a Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) affiliate on the Oswego campus. With the help of the local senior citizen volunteer program, he wrote a proposal to ACTION in which he requested the services of a VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) volunteer to help establish the program. Not only did ACTION grant the request for a volunteer, but the LVA affiliate was established and is now coordinated by Pat Kardash, the VISTA volunteer who worked to link local and college community resources.

College students have the opportunity to work with community members not only on a tutor/learner basis, but also as fellow volunteers.

The program, Literacy Volunteers of Oswego County, encourages both college students and community members to volunteer as literacy tutors. As the coordinator, Pat Kardash, points out, "The office just happens to be on campus. There is no separation between the community program and the college program." This situation allows college students the opportunity to work with community members not only on a tutor/learner basis, but also as fellow volunteers.

When asked how many Oswego students participate in the program, Kardash replied that she does not break the tutors up that way—meaning that community members and college students are all regarded as literacy tutors, rather than as "student" tutors and "community" tutors. Kardash does estimate that approximately 17 student tutors have participated in the LV of Oswego County program.

Those interested in tutoring through the Oswego program have the choice of attending a training workshop held at any local Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) affiliate. The LVA group located at Oswego offers the 18 hour training session in September, primarily to encourage student participation. The training program, administered by Kardash, gives tutors concrete material with which to work when instructing learners. Students and community members interested inworking with limited English-speaking adults can also be trained as English As a Second Language (ESL) tutors.

In order to recruit Oswego students to volunteer as literacy tutors, the organization distributes materials in the new student packets and has a special bulletin board on which pertinent information is posted. Each month, Kardash contacts tutors who volunteer with her program to ensure that there are no problems between the learner and tutor that impede the learning process.

Kardash explains that a number of learners have problems in addition to that of illiteracy. The majority of learners are referred to the program by various human service organizations. LV of Oswego County works closely with the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), a service that offers basic adult education classes, vocational training, and continuing education programs. Some tutors are matched with BOCES learners and, because BOCES has classroom sites at the college, meet weekly on the campus for two, one-hour sessions.

Literacy Volunteers of Oswego County receives part of its funding from an allocation to the Community Services Project, a student group at SUNY Co Oswego. LVof Oswego County occupies an office in the Student Association building as an in-kind donation from the college. In addition, the college provides space for some of the weekly tutoring sessions. Presently, Kardash is the only paid staff person working with this organization, although she works closely with students who volunteer to help with the organization of the program.

In the future, Literacy Volunteers of Oswego County hopes to offer more opportunities to its learner population. Currently, LV of Oswego sponsors a meeting for learners where they can discuss their educational experiences with one another. Another opportunity the organization gives to its learners is the confidence and ability to use the college library. Some, reports Kardash, have ventured into and used the campus library facilities. It is only a matter of time before others do the same.

For more information, contact:

Pat Kardash
Literacy Volunteers of Oswego
Community Services, Hewitt Union
SUNY Co Oswego
Oswego, NY 13126
Phone: (315) 341-2500

Dr. George Bilicic
President, Literacy Volunteers of Oswego
Dean of Continuing Education
Room 610, Culkin Hall
SUNY Co Oswego
Oswego, NY 13126

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

With student initiative, Project Literacy was founded in 1988 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) to give students the opportunity to work with local literacy efforts in the community. Project Literacy directs a learning program for University employees and has started an innovative reading program which uses student volunteers to share books with children. The committee also seeks to educate and raise awareness of literacy through its local educational programs. With more than 150 student volunteers, Project Literacy is having a positive impact on local efforts to increase literacy.

Project Literacy has started an innovative reading program which uses student volunteers to share books with children.

Structure of Project Literacy

Project Literacy is based at the UNC-CH Campus Y, a department within the Division of Student Affairs that helps coordinate thirty-four committees dedicated to student interaction in the community. The Campus Y provides office space, secretarial support, and a solid operational foundation. The support provided by the Campus Y, coupled with the presence of a strong campus and community advisory council, ensures that Project Literacy has continuity and lasting impact.

A group of student organizers meets on a regular basis and coordinates the daily affairs of Project Literacy. The group is composed of the co-chairs of Project Literacy, a treasurer, the UNC Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE) coordinator, and the directors of KIDSREAD, Outreach, Awareness, Membership, and Adult Matching. The student tutors meet twice a month with the Project leaders to get updates on current affairs in literacy. These meetings promote communication among tutors and volunteers from other aspects of the program, and provide a forum to discuss the challenging experiences involved with literacy work. The meetings also gives students exposure to literacy issues on a continual basis.

Adult Reading Program

The Adult Program of Project Literacy draws from two previously untapped populations: student tutors and University employees learners. Putting these two groups together creates an environment in which both tutors and employees can help and learn from one another. In this respect, Project Literacy stands alone as the first group on the UNC campus to unite employees and students. Project Literacy draws together different community organizations with wide-ranging methods of teaching for adults. With student tutors trained by the Orange County Literacy Council (OCLC), the group is able to provide individualized assistance to adults reading at the lowest levels. In cooperation with Durham Technical Community College (DTCC), Project Literacy places employees in Adult Basic Education classes which take place on campus and in the community. These collaborations give the project flexibility and allows the employees accessibility since all classroom and one-on-one activity occurs at the campus work place. The University offers one hour of paid time and employees use one hour of their own time each week.

Much of the current success of the Adult Program can be attributed to the existence of a functional advisory council.

Much of the current success of the Adult Program can be attributed to the existence of a functional advisory council. This council consists of representatives from all groups essential to the project, including: the director of the physical plant, the Adult education director at DTCC, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at UNC, the president of the OCLC, a member of the UNC faculty, and literacy experts from throughout the state.

This advisory council serves as a think tank and sounding board for developing methods of recruiting and teaching the physical plant employees. With the council members' advice, UNC student organizers recruited employees in a series of meetings with sections of the housekeeping staff. By distributing a simple interest form to more than 400 employees, the students found nearly than 100 adults interested in improving their reading skills. These employees were contacted by phone after the meetings, and times were scheduled for diagnostic evaluation sessions at DTCC. According to the evaluation and learner preference, the employees are able to enter middle or upper level adult classes or one-to-one tutoring with a student volunteer. Currently, twenty-six adults are attending Adult Basic Education classes, and eight employees are meeting once a week with a student tutor trained in the Laubach method by OCLC staff.

This three-tiered system allows the program to cater to almost all adult learning needs. With positive feedback from students, employees, and supervisors involved with the program, the project has great potential for expansion. Plans are underway to begin recruiting from other areas within the Physical Plant division as well as support staff from the campus store, warehouses, cafeterias, and the University hospital. With all of these possibilities for growth, the Adult Reading Program will continue to make reading a possibility for all employees at the University.

In the spring of 1990, Project Literacy had a surplus of students interested in working with adult learners. In response to this, the organizers created a project with Durham Technical Community College which places UNC students in Adult Basic Education classes throughout Orange County. The volunteers offer individual support for beginning adult learners in the ABE classes. The volunteers receive a three-hour orientation and sensitivity training. They are supervised and supported on an ongoing basis by the ABE teachers. The students work primarily with Basic Reading learners although a limited number of volunteers are placed in ESL classes.

KIDSREAD

The KIDSREAD program has been operating at UNC since November 1988 and currently involves 81 students. Volunteers in the program read childrens' books in centers throughout Orange County. Initially, UNC students were placed in Head Start centers throughout Orange County; however, the program is undergoing a series of expansions. Opening a site at Victory Village, the campus day care center, has made the enrichment through KIDSREAD available to an even broader population of children. KIDSREAD works with the local reading program, Motheread, to implement a more comprehensive reading curriculum based on the Motheread storysharing method. This method allows greater participation from the children through the discussion of various emotions and themes contained in the stories.

Summer Projects

Project Literacy members have come up with creative ways to overcome the problem of volunteer attrition during the summer.

Project Literacy members have come up with creative ways to overcome the problem of volunteer attrition during the summer. Students have been able to develop a summer substitute program for the Adult Reading Program. Summer school students, faculty, and staff are trained to serve as substitutes in the summer months. Employees are notified of the summer program and have been receptive to it because they understand the lack of student presence from June to August.

For student tutors who are leaving Chapel Hill for the summer or who have graduated, Project Literacy provides the names and telephone numbers of literacy agencies in the students' home communities. The students are encouraged to contact the local agencies and continue their involvement in literacy work.

Project Literacy and SCALE

The Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE) grew out of the work the student organizers of Project Literacy initiated at UNC-CH. SCALE (see profile in *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts*) is a network of campus literacy programs around the country. The network, based at the UNC-CH Campus Y, promotes the sharing of ideas among existing campus literacy programs and also serves as a catalyst and information service for students interested in starting new programs.

For more information, contact:

Jim Justice and Shelle Wheless, Co-Chairs
Project Literacy
Campus Y Building
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5115
Phone: (919) 962-2333

University of Pennsylvania

The university is a model of how an institution can get involved in urban issues.

The University of Pennsylvania is a model of how faculty, administrators, and students can work together to involve a campus in urban issues. "Literacy is an example where the resources of the university can be very helpful to community problems," says Barbara Stevens, executive assistant to Penn's president. The university is involved in literacy through the academic and research interests of the faculty as well as through direct service in tutoring.

Part of the university's commitment comes from the support and actions of its president, Sheldon Hackney. Hackney is firmly committed to improving and increasing the connections between the university and the city. Several of his initiatives have concerned community education. Hackney was a founder of the Committee to Support Philadelphia Public Schools, and is chairman of the West Philadelphia Partnership, which supports economic development and education in the areas around Penn.

Hackney is also committed to involving undergraduates in community issues. He is one of the professors for "Urban Universities and Their Communities," an honors seminar in which undergraduate students study issues of higher education and cities. Students enrolled in the course participate in a research project on city government, development, or education, supervised by the agency director and a Penn professor. Projects have included work in local literacy and education programs. One project, for example, led to the creation of the West Philadelphia Youth Improvement Corps, which started in 1984 as a summer project for 60 teenagers and has grown to a year-round project funded by a $70,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

A number of distinct tutoring projects at Penn offer the chance for students, faculty, and staff to work one-to-one with learners. The campus Adult Literacy Committee recruits faculty and staff members along with students to tutor basic reading and English as a Second Language (ESL) at a local literacy agency. The university's Hillel organization sponsors Project Chai, an adult tutoring project run through the city-wide Mayor's Commission on Literacy. Other Penn students volunteer through Penn Extension, the campus volunteer office. In addition, the School of Education offers a course on "Fieldwork in Adult Literacy," which combines weekly seminars on theories of literacy with fieldwork in the community.

Faculty members involved in literacy research can apply their work to serve the community.

The Graduate School of Education, which offers a masters program in adult literacy, houses the Literacy Research Center. The Literacy Research Center was established in 1983 to assist academic institutions, businesses, and governments in promoting literacy in the United States and abroad. The Center is an example of how faculty members interested in literacy issues can apply their work to serve the community. It developed from research interests of faculty members, who got together and approached the provost and head of the Graduate School with a proposal for an organized way to pursue their common interests. The Center has two major objectives: to develop policy on literacy-related problems through basic and applied research; and to increase communication between literacy researchers and practitioners.

Faculty affiliated with the Center include representatives of departments as diverse as psychology, sociology, romance languages, linguistics, anthropology, city planning, education, oriental studies, and the Wharton School of Business. Some of the research projects undertaken include work on adult literacy training programs, literacy in multilingual settings, the relationship between reading and writing development in children, computer literacy, acquisition of statistical concepts and skills, and cross-cultural studies of literacy development in the Third World.

The Center also participates in programs to serve the local community. These include: 1) the Literacy Network Seminar Program, providing support to school administrators and teachers; 2) a lunchtime speaker series open to literacy specialists, practitioners, and students; and 3) the reading/writing/study services of the school of education, providing instruction to learners of all ages.

In the 1986-87 academic year, the university was the host and helped organize two major local conferences on adult literacy. The first, a University-Community Forum on Literacy, drew over 250 representatives of business, higher education, and community literacy services. This "town meeting" enabled literacy providers to meet with leaders from businesses and universities to discuss community needs and ways to create partnerships for literacy. The second meeting, a working conference on adult literacy, was co-sponsored by the Center for Literacy, a local literacy service provider with close ties to the university. Participants included adult literacy workers in community organizations, school, unions and churches, and literacy researchers in schools, centers, and universities.

In connection with the United Nations International Literacy Year in 1990, the Literacy Research Center is holding an international conference entitled World Literacy in the Year 2000: Research and Policy Dimensions, which is sponsored by UNESCO, UNICEF, the U.S. Department of State, and the James S. McDonnell Foundation.

The University of Pennsylvania's programs have been helped by a wide range of contacts in the community at all levels of involvement, from members of Philadelphia's Mayor's Commission on Literacy to leaders of community agencies and neighborhood schools.

For more information, contact:

Dan Wagner, Director
Literacy Research Center
Graduate School of Education
3700 Walnut Street
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6216
Phone: (215) 898-1925

VISTA Volunteer—Michael Mackillop

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

When Michael MacKillop was in the sixth grade he and his friends decided that one day they were going to join the VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) volunteer corps. Years later, as a student at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, MacKillop remembered his childhood plans and decided that after graduating in 1986, he would become a VISTA volunteer. Founded in 1965, the VISTA program is now administered through ACTION, the federal domestic volunteer agency. Volunteers are recruited to work with non-profit organizations which grapple with poverty and poverty-related issues. While VISTA pays its volunteers a monthly stipend to cover living expenses, the volunteers work day-to-day for individual community non-profit organizations.

"It's a real education, learning how people learn."

Because MacKillop's primary interest was education (he taught English in China for one year), he applied to work with Oregon Literacy, Inc. There, he develops literacy programs and strengthens established community projects. He also volunteers his time as a tutor, working individually with a learner on a regular basis. "It's a real education, learning how people learn," MacKillop remarks.

"I think students [learners] should be involved.....in the issue."

MacKillop's job involves the many aspects of and approaches to literacy. "It's a lot of responsibility," he asserts. For example, he recruits both learners and volunteers for Oregon Literacy, organizes various meetings for the community, and promotes awareness of the opportunities and projects offered by the program. At present, he is trying to establish a support system for tutors and learners: "I would like to set up a forum for students [learners] to talk about their experiences as non-readers and about their involvement in a literacy program. I think students [learners] should be involved in the ... issue."

MacKillop not only works with local community members, he also plans to collaborate with local college communities as well. Because most students are at school eight months out of the year, it is difficult to match them with an adult learner who requires continuous instruction. However, in conjunction with Portland State University, MacKillop is exploring ways other than tutoring to use the resources college students have to offer. Although still in the planning stages, MacKillop's ideas include training education majors to train others as literacy tutors and establishing a "drop-in learning center" where adult non-readers can go for reading instruction. MacKillop reasons that the center will provide adult non-readers with regular assistance and, at the same time, allow student tutors the flexibility they need in scheduling.

MacKillop also plans to combine the resources of Oregon Literacy with those available at the area community colleges. "The services we [community colleges/Oregon Literacy] offer often overlap one another so we want to coordinate tutor and learner opportunities," says MacKillop. This, he hopes, will result in more effective programs for both projects.

"It's a very different environment from college—I'm no longer isolated in my own world."

MacKillop's work as a VISTA volunteer gives him experience in a wide variety of areas. His job calls for organizational skills and also demands creativity and initiative. As he says, "I have sort of a free rein here." When speaking about the experience in general, MacKillop responds positively: "It's been very good. Just an eye-opening experience of how an organization works. It's a very different environment from college—I'm no longer isolated in my own world. I'm exposed to many different people and it's giving me a greater awareness of worldly problems." What is he planning to do when his year as a volunteer is over? "I'm not quite sure, but this experience has opened up many possibilities. I may go back to school."

For more information about VISTA, contact:

Patricia Rodgers, Director
VISTA and Student Community Service
1100 Vermont Avenue, N.W., 8th floor
Washington, DC 20525
Phone: (800) 424-8867, (202) 634-9445

Yale University

The Yale Adult Literacy Volunteer Project pairs members of the Yale community who have been trained as tutors with adult learners from the New Haven community. Since 1985, more than 150 people from Yale have volunteered with the project.

The emphasis on learning meshed well with Yale's role as an educational institution.

The first step for the volunteer project began in 1985 when the coordinators of Yale Volunteer Services sent out a survey asking all 7,000 Yale employees about their involvement in the community. With contact names collected from the survey responses, the coordinator established an advisory committee of staff and faculty. The committee decided to develop a university-supported volunteer project.

A program focusing on the issue of literacy was appropriate for a number of reasons. About 20 percent of New Haven residents—or 25,000 people—are functionally illiterate. The local volunteer organization, Literacy Volunteers of New Haven, faced a critical shortage of tutors, averaging only thirty volunteers when hundreds were needed. In addition, the program's emphasis on learning meshes well with Yale's role as an educational institution. The program draws volunteers from all members of the Yale community — staff, graduate students, administrators, retired faculty, secretaries, union members, and undergraduates.

The current project is a collaboration among three groups: Literacy Volunteers of New Haven, the New Haven Adult Basic Education (ABE) program (run by the Connecticut Department of Education with federal funding), and Yale Volunteer Services. The three groups met to discuss cooperative programs and came up with a division of skills and resources to meet the needs of the proposed employee volunteer program.

Literacy Volunteers of New Haven recruits adult learners and provides training and technical support. ABE pays a reading teacher who acts as an instructor and field coordinator. Yale furnishes physical resources, (including classrooms, training space, and parking); recruits employees as tutors; purchases training materials; recognizes volunteers; and pays the volunteer services coordinator who supervises the project.

Volunteer tutors receive ten hours of training and may tutor learners in either English as a Second Language (ESL) or Basic Reading (BR). There are also opportunities for volunteers to work as classroom aides in an ESL class held on campus. Tutors meet with learners twice a week, for one hour. A Yale building is made available for two evenings a week tutors and students meetings .

Volunteers come from all segments of the Yale University community. Current and retired faculty members, along with administrators, graduate and undergraduate students, nurses, librarians, and other staff members have volunteered as tutors. Both staff and faculty members serve on an advisory committee, which was instrumental in the development of the project. "One truly unique aspect of this program is that it includes volunteers from all over the campus. People from the art department are donating their services to design a recruiting poster; others are offering their homes for meetings and still others are giving of their time and money," says Pamela Bisbee-Simonds, the program's coordinator.

"One truly unique aspect of this program is that it includes volunteers from all over the campus."

In addition to tutoring, volunteers have also served in a variety of roles. The project director serves as a member of the Mayor's Task Force for Literacy. A number of volunteers organized Literacy Awareness Week on campus in 1988. Volunteers also coordinate Yale/Literacy Volunteers information meetings and receptions honoring adult learners and tutors, and graduate students from the Yale School of Organization and Management have served as long range planning consultants to Literacy Volunteers. Finally, students, faculty and staff utilize the Yale weekly newspaper to promote and recruit additional tutors, volunteers and supporters.

In addition, the original group of twenty-seven tutors, recruited in the first year of operations, has taken on a leadership role. For example, experienced Yale volunteers call new tutors each month to check on progress and problems and meet and interview prospective volunteers.

As needs have changed, the Yale/Literacy Volunteer Project has responded. In 1988, Project LYL (Literacy Volunteers/Yale/Lulac Educational Services) was launched. It is a satellite program offering literacy classes in Spanish and English as a Second Language through classroom instruction and individual tutoring by Yale faculty and students in Yale's Puerto Rican Cultural House. Literacy Volunteers received a $1,000 state "Leaders of Readers" award from *Family Circle* magazine for this effort.

In the next year the Project hopes to develop new facets to the program. One idea under discussion is to use theater to help Literacy Volunteers recruit adult learners. The program director is seeking undergraduates to write a play that presents the process of transformation that adult learners experience. A student troupe will then perform the drama in English and Spanish in community neighborhoods, at work places and at churches. Students from the Yale Hunger and Homelessness Action Project are working with the project staff to bring tutoring services to three area homeless shelters. Yale students, faculty and staff will be recruited on campus, trained by Literacy Volunteers and placed directly at tutoring sites in the shelters.

Yale's involvement in literacy has spurred other literacy activities in the city. More than 200 tutors from all over the city now work with Literacy Volunteers of New Haven. The Mayor's Office in New Haven has formed a Task Force for Literacy. The director of Yale Volunteer Services and a Yale professor of bilingual education both serve on the city-wide commission.

For more information, contact:

Pamela Bisbee-Simonds, Coordinator
Yale Volunteer Services
Box 404A
Yale Station
New Haven, CT 06520
Phone: (203) 432-2420

ISSUES 11

Introduction

There are a variety of opinions and theories about what makes a person literate in today's society. As discussed in *Chapter 2: What is Literacy?*, debates about the number of illiterate Americans and the extent of the literacy problem in this country engage literacy service providers, scholars, and politicians. The purpose of *Chapter 11: Issues* is to give readers a sense of the variety of ideas that concern people who work with and study the issue of literacy. Seven articles that represent a range of opinions about literacy and illiteracy have been reprinted in this chapter.

The purpose is to give readers a sense of the variety of ideas that concern people who work with and study the issue of literacy.

The authors of the articles come from around the country and have different perspectives on the issue of literacy. They are listed in the order in which their articles appear in this chapter.

The *National Adult Literacy Congress* took place in Philadelphia in September 1987. It was the first gathering of learner representatives from a variety of literacy programs around the country. The proclamations from the Congress are the product of three days of intensive debate among the learner representatives. The statements represent the views of adult learners on issues such as literacy, perceptions of illiterates, and literacy in the workplace.

Jonathan Kozol is a literacy activist who has worked as a school teacher in Boston and written a number of books on literacy. "Fifteen Myths About Illiterate America" examines and responds to common misconceptions about illiteracy in the United States.

Ralph Arrindell, an adult new reader, is on the staff of a community literacy program. Arrindell's article, "L.V.A. Conference," discusses the involvement of adult learners at a national literacy conference and addresses how new readers can participate in the management of literacy programs.

David Harman, a professor at Columbia University, has studied literacy for over twenty years. "Keeping Up in America" offers a historical perspective on literacy in the United States from the 17th century to the present.

Michael Holzman works as a professor at Lehman College. He has helped set up literacy programs in conjunction with the California

Conservation Corps. "Teaching is Remembering" focuses on the role of a faculty member in setting up a literacy program. The article also discusses some of the human costs of illiteracy.

Hanna Arlene Fingeret is the director of Literacy South in Raleigh, North Carolina. She is also a faculty member at North Carolina State University in the department of Adult and Continuing Education.

Pat Rigg is a consultant with American Language and Literacy in Spokane, Washington, and *Francis E. Kazemek* is a professor in the Department of Education at Eastern Washington University in Cheney.

National Student Proclamations

Proclamations from the delegates at the National Student Congress
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—September 1987

Who we are: Educating the public about illiteracy

The term "illiterate" is here to stay but it needs to be associated with positive ideas such as growth, dignity, pride, excitement in learning, and ongoing learning. Illiteracy should not be used to suggest dumb, stupid, diseased, or handicapped.

"Illiterate" is here to stay but it needs to be associated with positive ideas such as growth, dignity, pride, excitement in learning, and ongoing learning.

a. Short-term education of the public: Information should be more widely available and presented openly. More students need to come forward. Students should make their own statements. Actors should not be used. Information should be more specific; outreach groups could help with this. We need to be persistent in giving information to the public and show successful illiterates.

b. Long-range education of the public: Information should show the educational benefits of literacy and the benefits to the next generation. Society needs to remove the time limit on learning and make a commitment to life-long learning. Literacy should be seen as a right, not a privilege. People, especially the young, need to know that because of changes in society people need more education today.

Literacy and the workplace

a. Companies. Companies need to be informed about the problems of illiteracy. When students go to companies and commit themselves to work on their G.E.D.s, their rights must be protected. It should be illegal for an employer to fire someone who does not read. When students make a commitment to overcoming their reading problems, they should ask their employers for their help and commitment. Companies should encourage employees to seek help.

b. Students. Students should tell employers that they have made a sacrifice to learn to read and write. Students should take job-related materials to their tutors and study them with their tutors, so they can know what their job is. Students should recruit other students on the job and encourage them to get help like we did.

c. Legislation. There should be tax credits for companies who help students.

d. Judicial System. We want judges to be aware of the problems of illiteracy. We want them to ask people who come before them: "Do you read and write?" We want the judges to tell people that help is available.

The National Student Proclamations, voiced by student representatives of adult literacy programs from the fifty states and the District of Columbia, address six important areas concerning the problem of illiteracy in the United States. Each statement was proclaimed to the nation in Congress Hall and unanimously approved by the delegates on September 11, 1987.

*from **Students Speaking Out: A Publication for and by New Readers.** Volume 2, Number 1, January 1988. Reprinted by permission of Laubach Literacy Action/U.S. Program of Laubach*

Legislation, funding and resources for literacy

Learning is a shared responsibility between society and its citizens.

People who cannot read have the right to an education. We are ambitious, creative and talented individuals. However, we need the skills of reading and writing to be more productive. This learning is a shared responsibility between society and its citizens.

As a part of society's responsibility, it is critical that, first, funding be increased to reach all illiterate people, and secondly, programs include support for tutors, teachers, materials, student participation and outreach.

America needs all of us to solve today's problems and create the future.

Our involvement in issues of literacy

We're the experts on issues of literacy because we've lived it.

We as students want a say in what is going on in the issues of literacy. We're the experts on issues of literacy because we've lived it. We can enrich an organization by being part of it. We can give programs information that they cannot get themselves. Other students can benefit by seeing new readers like themselves. We have lived it, and we can help students with some of the rough spots because we've been there. We, as students and new readers, want to be given the opportunity to work in our communities solving the illiteracy problem.

Literacy for non-English speaking adults

We the people of the United States, whose first language is from another country and who are learning English as a second language, wish to affirm and preserve our native languages, cultures, and histories. This is being done primarily in our homes: from grandparents to parents to children. To preserve our rich heritages, we use our native languages with our families, to teach cultural dances, to travel to our native lands, to cook our special foods, to tell stories, sing songs and chant chants. We admire and hold our ancestors in great honor.

We recommend the following actions to the nation:

That teachers and tutors be given the best training possible: training based on *proven* and *effective* methods.

That new readers help guide teachers and tutors in *what works* for students.

That conversation be part of instruction.

That wherever possible teachers and tutors from each ethnic group be recruited and trained to work with their own people because they are especially sensitive to culture and language. That English-speaking teachers and tutors also be used with these ethnic teachers and tutors.

That each person needing to learn English be assessed at the level they need to begin.

That a variety of learning methods be offered, including one-to-one tutoring and small-group instruction.

That this nation urge all citizens to learn more than one language, especially those languages of ethnic groups living in their own community.

What's worked for us

Every student is different. Everyone works at a different pace and has different needs, interests and time available for lessons.

Every student is different. Everyone works at a different pace and has different needs, interests and time available for lessons. However, there are some things that will help every student to succeed in learning.

Students can learn better if they have teachers and tutors who are dedicated to the student, have unselfish love and positive attitudes, can build self-confidence and are well-trained to meet the needs of their particular students.

We believe that one-to-one works better because everyone can work at his or her own pace, it's more comfortable, you get more attention and much better results. We need the kinds of support we can get from tutors and teachers. They can help us with more than reading. They can help us read the Bible, do mathematics, write letters or checks; whatever we need.

We also need positive support from our families, friends, schools and churches, indeed from everyone in public and private sectors, including the Congress.

We can "tell it like it is." We can teach some things that tutors and teachers cannot.

We especially need support from other students. We need opportunities such as student support groups and student-teacher get togethers. We can "tell it like it is." We can teach some things that tutors and teachers cannot. We can cheer for each other and learn from each other.

"Fifteen Myths about Illiterate America"

by Jonathan Kozol

A number of unexamined statements—some of them with misleading implications—have become imbedded in the media's discussion of this issue. We present here those that we regard as most injurious. We don't expect the press to fall in line with our opinions. We do believe that journalists will want to take a hard look at these questions and arrive at some conclusions of their own.

1. "Illiterate people suffer from an affliction. Their status constitutes an epidemic."

This language constitutes an insult to nonreaders.

An epidemic is an Act of God. Illiteracy is an Act of Man. Illiterates are not "afflicted." They are the products of an education system that provides the children of the affluent with many times the yearly fiscal allocation granted to the children of the poor.

"Last year," wrote *The New York Times* this winter, "the richest New Jersey districts spent about $1,100 more for each pupil than did the poorest districts..." The spending gap four years ago was $500 less. The disparity, *The Times* reported, "is higher now than it was twelve years ago."

The Boston Globe reported that per-pupil allocations in some Massachusetts schools are four times the sum invested in each child in less affluent systems.

Low-income Lawrence, Massachusetts, can afford only $2,200 yearly for each child's education. Lawrence turns out hundreds of illiterates each year. In Weston, Connecticut, nearly $7,000 is invested yearly in each pupil. There are few illiterates in Weston.

Our task is not to heal affliction. It is to redress injustice.

2. "Illiterates are reluctant to come forward. Their hesitation is the greatest obstacle we face."

Illiterates do face high risks of humiliation. The fact that millions overcome their fears and ask for help, only to be turned away for lack of funds, is testimony to their courage and our parsimony.

In Illinois alone, according to the Business Council for Effective Literacy, 117,000

from ***Where Stands the Republic? Illiteracy: A Warning and a Challenge to the Nation's Press.*** *A report, with recommendations to the American Newspaper Publishers Association and the American Society of Newspaper Editors, written at the invitation of Cox Newspapers. Published by Cox Newspapers, October 1986. Reprinted by permission of Cox Enterprises, Inc.*

Jonathan Kozol is the author of several books including *Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America, Death at an Early Age, The Night is Dark, Free Schools,* and *Illiterate America.* He has received awards from the Guggenheim, Ford, and Rockefeller Foundations and has taught at Yale University and South Boston High School.

adults were enrolled in Adult Basic Education classes during 1983. An additional 112,000 adults who had asked for help were turned away.

Literacy Action in Atlanta with an enviable 80 percent graduation rate, lost 85 percent of its fiscal support in 1982 as a result of federal cuts. *The New York Times* reports that it was forced to turn away "hundreds of applicants."

Blaming the victim is particularly unkind when the victims have been waiting at the door but lack the verbal skills to contradict those who accuse them of a lack of motivation.

3. "Illiterates are mostly immigrants and nonwhite people."

While percentages are highest for our poorest people, and therefore for black and Hispanic adults, the largest *numbers* of illiterate Americans are white and native-born. Book publisher Harold McGraw states that perhaps 25 percent are immigrants.

We would face a serious literacy crisis in this nation even if we had no recent immigrants—nor even those forced immigrants who came here in slave ships of an earlier age.

4. "Illiterates are people who, by oversight, somehow fell through the cracks."

Such phrasing substitutes the whim of error for unequal allocations of resources. Illiterates did not fall through the cracks. Most of them never had a floor to stand on in the first place.

5. "With the use of phonics there would be no literacy crisis."

Those who blame our reading failures on the fact that rigid phonics were replaced since World War II by more eclectic methods may forget the fact that the same methods they deplore were used in affluent and impoverished neighborhoods alike. Most of those who read these words were taught to read by methods which were not exclusively phonetic. The relative excellence of teachers, smaller class-size, and the presence of supportive extra services in affluent school districts, reinforced by early reading in the homes of literate adults, help us to understand why the same methods used throughout America should have produced large numbers of illiterates among the poor and millions of good critical readers among population groups whose parents were more fortunate.

Phonics has respected advocates. Fanatical excess discredits a good cause.

6. "America has the world's best education system. It is the students, not the system, that are at fault."

It would be more accurate to say that U.S. education at its very best is unexcelled but, at its worst, is certainly inferior to that afforded to most citizens in comparably wealthy and developed social orders.

While international comparisons must be advanced with caution, it is agreed by most observers that the overall success of U.S. education lags behind that of a number of our economic rivals. Depending on which indices and sources we accept, the United States ranks between fifteenth and fiftieth worldwide in literacy levels. ABC News pegs us at about fifteenth (eighteenth for men, thirteenth for women). *The Washington Post* in November, 1982, citing Rudolf Flesch (author of *"Why Johnny Can't Read"*), and *The New York Times*, also in 1982, citing Mrs. Barbara Bush, pegged us at forty-ninth—a number which is much disputed. ABC, identifying its source as the U.N., tells us that the top five nations in the world are Australia, Finland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and the Soviet Union. It is difficult to know if these comparisons are soundly based. It is also less important, in our belief, to ask how well America stacks up against the foreign competition than to ask how well we measure up against our own potential.

Our nation is unique in wealth and governance: We are our own worst enemy or else our own best rival. If we compete, it should be against what we could be—not what other nations claim to be but frequently are not.

7. "There has been a drive for excellence for several years. Tougher tests and higher standards have begun to raise the reading levels of the students now emerging from the public schools."

A nation is imperilled by the willingness to take an avalanche of rhetoric for the real thing. Figures released by the College Board a year ago indicated that SATs had risen about eight tenths of one percent. A study by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), issued at the same time, indicated slight improvements in the reading levels of some of our seventeen-year-olds. What many press reports did not observe was that less than two million students even dared to take the SATs or other college entrance tests. Meanwhile, one million more had disappeared from schooling altogether every year since 1980.

A more disturbing fact uncovered by this study was the stunning gap between those who were children of well-educated parents and those who were children of the adults we describe within this book. Test results for seventeen-year-olds whose parents had less than a high school education were the same as those of thirteen-year-old kids whose parents had attended college.

These outcomes were predictable. Tougher tests at the end of the road without enhanced and solid educative progress in the previous twelve years can function only as a post-hoc punitive attack on those whom we have shortchanged since their childhood. The stiffening of graduation standards, at the same time that the funds have diminished, threatens to intensify the drop-out crisis by demanding more of those to whom we now give less.

Affluent children may have done a trifle better—but a larger number of the poor have been excluded from the competition altogether.

Tests do not teach reading. Only well-paid teachers do.

8. "If illiteracy rates are high it is the fault of parents who do not read to their kids."

Such statements fail to recognize the anguish undergone by parents who cannot respond to exhortations they can't read. Illiterate parents deserve no blame for inability to act upon the dictates of their conscience and good sense.

Scapegoating an illiterate parent is mean-spirited and useless. Literacy action targeted at youthful parents would be more productive and in better taste.

9. "Television is to blame."

Most people who read these words grew up with television, as this author did. We nonetheless learned to read and write; and most of us still manage to enjoy good books and we depend on newspapers. Television diverts good readers sometimes from the full enjoyment of their skills; there is no evidence that it is a major factor in obstructing acquisition of such skills.

Illiterate adults, unable to acquire information from the printed word, unquestionably watch more television than skillful readers do. People are not illiterate *because* they watch TV. They may watch TV because they are illiterate.

The vigorous commitment recently displayed by a commercial network (ABC) and its nonprofit partner (PBS) in launching an unprecedented literacy effort on TV justifies our faith that television may be viewed not as a rival but as a potentially invaluable ally. There is no commercial pay-off for a television network in attempting to enhance the reading competence of those who otherwise might be its captive clientele. If ever there was an act of civic virtue, this is it.

Rather than condemn TV, we ought to explore the ways to use it to bring people back to print.

10. "Computerized communications and some other aspects of technology have rendered literacy obsolete."

Computers rely on written words. People instruct computers. Other people are obliged to read them. The heightened capacity for information transfer that computers now make possible, increasing the profusion of the print materials that now surround us, calls not only for more solid reading skills but for higher aptitude in skimming, sorting, filtering, and analyzing capabilities. Drowning in data poured forth by computerized production, workers must discriminate continuously between the elemental and tangential. Consumers too are flooded with computerized solicitations, bills, and legally required notices. Those who can't read well and swiftly will be powerless to isolate the urgent item ("termination of phone service" or "bank overdraft") from the surrounding trivia.

Heightened technology intensifies the need for people with the competence to be its master.

11. "The problem is not that people cannot read but that they do not want to."

Illiterates do not elect to forfeit what they know already they cannot possess.

12. "Illiteracy is not the cause of poverty, injustice, unemployment. It is naive to try to solve this problem without trying first to alter the conditions that impoverish millions of our people."

The argument, heard paradoxically from both the Right and Left, is that we face a syndrome of dilemmas so immense that any intervention on the literacy front is doomed to be a futile enterprise. Literacy will not solve all our problems. It won't end hunger. It will not assure that every person has a home and proper medical attention. The point that counts is that, among a multitude of "causes," illiteracy is one of the very few that we have weapons to address. Many problems that contribute to the misery of human beings appear for now to be intractable. Most are politically volatile to a degree that guarantees contentious opposition. Illiteracy is one of the few aspects of injustice on which natural instincts of compassion and the toughest mandates of industrial and national self-interest coincide. It is, for these reasons, one of those rare items of American fair play around which a bipartisan consensus can be plausibly erected.

A wise society will not allow itself to lose this chance.

13. "The problem can be met at local levels. States and cities have the means to face this on their own."

This writing is intended to encourage local action. But local efforts cannot be successful if initiated out of context. The context of the city is the state, and, of the state, the nation.

New York City allocates $8.75 million yearly to address the needs of over a million functionally illiterate adults. This allocation, about nine dollars per nonreader, is by far the largest sum expended by a single city.
California, where a state senate study has identified 4.8 to 6 million functional illiterates, allocates $60 million in state funds to ABE—far more than any other state. Yet California ABE is forced to turn away 1,000 people every week. In Los Angeles alone, there are 10,000 adults on the waiting list.

If California cannot meet the need with local funding, no state can. If New York City cannot meet the need with local revenues, no city can.

Local groups can do a lot. But those who tell us that the local folks can do it on their own are just not being realistic.

14. "If the money simply isn't there, let the burden of the task be left to volunteers."

This is a dangerous and misleading statement.

(1) Volunteers have made a priceless contribution to this struggle. But it is a grave mistake to think that volunteers are free. It costs money to find them, train them, supervise them, provide them with a place to work and with the materials required to provide instruction. Absence of paid staff denies us the opportunity to tap into the mainstream of American compassion. Loss of organizers paid by VISTA, for example, is translated into forfeiture of thousands of potential unpaid volunteers. The choice is not between the federal dollar and the local volunteer. Without the federal dollar we are losing the required leverage to make use of volunteers.

(2) The traditional source of volunteers for many years—middle class women without careers—has diminished greatly as job opportunities for women have expanded. Even with the help of thousands of retired persons, there is no way that volunteers can meet so great a need. The two largest volunteer groups in the nation serve less than 100,000 people. The largest organization using volunteers in the entire state of Arkansas serves 300 people.

(3) The most effective use of volunteers is in collaboration with well-paid professionals. An excellent example of a group that brings together paid and unpaid workers, Literacy Action in Atlanta, needs about $400 for each student served. According to its chairman, Literacy Action serves less than one third the number of those *new* illiterates emerging from Atlanta's public schools each year.

We are often asked this question: "Can you solve a problem of this sort by throwing money at it?" This may be the one case where you can.

15. "We need more information. Research is needed to find out what works."

We know what works. Researchers have made their case and have provided us with countless models of success.

The research needed next is that which monitors our progress as we move into a new phase of expanded effort.

What we do not need are further studies that reiterate the work that has been done already. What we do need are the energy and the dollars to take action on the things we know.

L.V.A. Conference

by Ralph Arrindell

It all started when the question was asked "How can we get students to go to Chicago for the Conference?"

It all started when the question was asked "How can we get students [adult learners] to go to Chicago for the Conference?" It would be nice to have students attend the Conference but the L.V.A. had no money to send students there. It is held by the Literacy Volunteers of America in different places every year.

We had a few students who went to the Conference last year, in 1985, and would like more students to attend this year, 1986. After meeting, Grace Holmes, Director of Tutor Training, and myself went out for lunch to talk about what we could do to help students go to the Conference. I started telling her I would like to go even if I have to pay my own way but what about other students? Grace suggested different things we could do to raise money. So I said, "What about a raffle?" She said, "Good." We were thinking about the time we had because Grace was going on vacation and I was leaving a week later. So we had to find someone to help with the raffle while we were on vacation.

At the next staff meeting, one of the things we talked about was the raffle. I looked around the table and said to myself, "Who can I ask to help?" Caryn Davis, who is the Brooklyn Site Coordinator, was a new person on the staff and seemed to be very nice and active. I asked her would she like to help? She said, "Sure, I would be glad to help" so, after the meeting, we talked about all the different things we needed to make the raffle work. For example, what kind of prizes we can get and where the raffle would be drawn.

We were thinking of drawing the raffle at the picnic in Central Park, which was governed by the Tutor Representative Committee, but time was too short so we decided to draw it in Brooklyn because Caryn was in charge. She had to make many phone calls to get people to donate prizes so we would not use the money we made to buy prizes.

After the raffle was drawn, the money we made and some money we got from L.V.A. was enough to send fifteen students to the Conference. We wanted the students from each site to attend so they could tell other students about the Conference. That didn't work out because students from some sites couldn't get time off work. Site coordinators were talking to students to encourage them to attend.

Before the Conference, we decided to meet with students and staff who were going to Chicago. We had a party at Eli Zal's apartment. He is our Executive Director. We talked about what our goals were and got to know more about each other. The second time we met at the J.C. Penney site with Marilyn Boutwell, our Associate Director, and myself. We talked about what we would do in case of emergency, how we could get to the airport and more information about the Conference. Marilyn

Literacy Volunteers of New York City, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the author.

Ralph Arrindell is a staff member at Literacy Volunteers of New York City, Inc. An adult new reader, Mr. Arrindell works with other staff and learners to orient and train them.

turned everything over to me. Ellen Steiner, who is the J.C. Penney Intensive Site Coordinator, had taken care of the students' plane tickets, on People Express, before she went on vacation. She led one group and I led the other.

The Conference was three days so we stayed in Chicago for three days and nights. We left New York from Newark on Thursday, October 16th, 1986 at 7:45 a.m. There were seven of us. We met at the airport. I was the last one getting there. They all looked at me and said, "Ralph, you are late. Boy are we glad to see you." I said to myself, "Mmmh, good." Everyone was there because we had to arrive at the airport one hour before the flight left so we could check in.

I felt responsible because I had all the plane tickets and some money for the students and all the papers with directions on how to get from the airport to the hotel and more. For me, this was something I never did before. I had to make sure the students were placed in the right seats. The students who smoked were in the smoking area. The ones who don't smoke sat in the non-smoking area. We had two students who had never flown before. I had to make sure they had someone to sit with them. As for me, I sat in the non-smoking area with Edwin.

Edwin and myself talked about the safety magazine and what we could do in case of emergency, after they gave us instructions. Being in charge, I walked around to make sure everybody was O.K. Grace was on the same flight so I knew if I had any problems I could ask for help, but everything was fine. The students were very comfortable so when I was going around I stopped and said "Hi" to Grace. She said, "Ralph, you are doing great, I like the way you are leading your group." I felt good about it because all my life I felt I couldn't do anything and when you can't read it's worse.

We flew for two hours. We arrived in Chicago at 9:45 a.m. Some people from L.V.A. were waiting for us with a sign up saying "L.V.A." We thought that was good because Chicago airport is one of the busiest in the world. It was very busy when we got there so the people who greeted us at the airport from L.V.A. were nice.

They showed us where to take the bus to the hotel. It was twenty minutes through the city to the hotel. It was very nice and exciting viewing Chicago. When we got to the hotel, we saw the rest of the students walking towards the hotel. They took the subway to get there. So we all walked in at the same time. I went over to the desk and checked in, we went to get information about the Conference.

They also had a room where the students met to talk about all the different things that were going on at the Conference.

The Conference took place in the Americana Hotel which is on Michigan Avenue in the city of Chicago. The hotel takes up one whole block and was very tall. The rooms were large. The workshops took place on three floors in different rooms. They also had a room where the students met to talk about all the different things that were going on at the Conference.

The first day in the students' room, we met students from different states and talked about workshops and what we would like to do. Some students talked about making a speech, others talked about doing a play and some talked about what kind of workshop they would attend. As for me, I was thinking about taking part in the play and making a speech and what kind of workshop I will attend. The students' room the first day was like an orientation. We heard about the Conference and what was going on: workshops, student forum, the opening ceremonies and the banquet. They were all at different times.

After I came out of the students' room, I went to my first workshop. It was about taking the G.E.D. test and the different subjects. It was the first time I heard how to take a test. It was very interesting for me. When a student is taking a test and has very little time, you must read as fast as you can. Don't stay too long on one question and come back to one later. When the person who is giving the test comes and says you have five minutes more, you must guess all the answers. It's better to give your paper in answering all the questions. You may get some right. If you don't answer all the questions, you don't have a chance. There were many more things I learned. I can give my own workshop in G.E.D. It was great.

After the workshop, I went back to the students' room where we all met again. Gabriel, who was coordinating the students' room was asking students to speak at the opening ceremonies. I said to myself "Good, I will get a chance to speak" but I didn't know what I will speak about. I stayed and listened to what other students had to say. Some wanted to talk about their experience in the program but it was suggested that it's better to speak about something else instead of telling about how you learned to read and write. Students thought they were being told what to say and what not to say. Most of the students who signed up to speak were from our program. We had fifteen students who went to the Conference. It was hard. Students wanted to talk about what they learned in the program so they were angry and upset. Some of them were beginners and didn't have the confidence or experience to talk about anything else.

We want to be heard and not be invisible.

When I left the students' room, I went out for lunch with Eli and Caryn. It made me feel good because things were on my mind. I was thinking "Why can't students speak about what they want?" I said to myself "I will speak about being heard and reaching out, stop being invisible." We want to be heard and not be invisible.

I remember walking down by the beach with Eli Zal and another staff member, Caryn Davis. We talked about Chicago, the windy city. It was a bit windy then. The walk was good and being away from home gave me a chance to think about other things instead of thinking about everyday life. For example, how my life had changed since I got into the program. I never liked to travel but now I love to go to different places, like going to Chicago for the Conference. It was the best I felt in a long time. The walk was short. We had to go back to the hotel in time for the opening ceremony.

When we got there, it had already begun and I saw two students who were sitting up on stage with the speakers. I said to myself "I don't think I will speak" so I decided to make a tape and make some pictures. Most students felt left out because they weren't included in the ceremony. They wanted to participate in it. The ceremony was great anyway.

What excited me the most was the Laotian refugees who were doing a dance because my ex-tutor, Nick, went to China. He told me about the illiteracy and a few more things about China so it made me pay a lot of attention to anything oriental.

I didn't get a chance to speak but that was O.K. because they had two students from our program. I felt good because I knew they were good speakers, even though they didn't speak too long.

The next day, at the students' room, we talked more about the student forum and what we were going to do. Some students decided not to speak. I remember talking to Marilyn and Caryn about the way the students felt because it was important to me. We had two students from the Committee we formed throughout the program. Greg Lees was the Gulf and Western Site Coordinator and was doing advocacy.

The student forum was a place where students could express themselves. I spoke about being heard and not being invisible. I also talked about the way L.V.A. advertises on T.V. The phone number disappears so fast that it takes a person who wants to join three times before he gets the number. Also, people who speak about illiteracy never show their faces. One person said people don't have to show their faces if they don't want to but if people don't appear, it doesn't seem real - like it's a real problem. They are not visible.

People who can read don't know what it's like not being able to read. I can explain what it feels like.

I had a chance to express myself about what it's like to be a student on staff. I have found it very helpful because of the type of information I can give to staff. People who can read don't know what it's like not being able to read. I can explain what it feels like.

I sat and listened to the other students speak. At the same time I was looking at the audience. They were serious and listening carefully. Students felt good because they had a chance to speak and express themselves. After the students spoke, they got a lot of applause from the audience and were greeted with hugs and kisses. Some people were crying, some were taking pictures of groups of students and people from the audience were smiling. It was great. Students felt good because they had a chance to participate in the conference and would have liked to do more.

The students spoke very strongly because they felt very good about themselves and were able to speak about things that were on their mind.

The students spoke very strongly because they felt very good about themselves and were able to speak about things that were on their mind. After the student forum, some people were asking questions. For example, what would be the best time to advertise on T.V. It was suggested that most people watch the news.

Then we went to the banquet. It was beautiful. The food was good and there were some speeches which were interesting.

We also did a Writing Workshop with Marilyn. The participants were amazed to see students were teaching and explaining what writing does for them because reading and writing go together. We used the Big Apple Journal and a piece of writing I did called "Part of Life" and more. The workshop was enlightening. Marilyn had to leave to catch her flight on time. Students ended the workshop answering questions about writing.

The night before I left Chicago, I was walking around the hotel and saw a church on the premises. I decided to attend because I felt lonely as half of the students had left early that evening. It was the first time I saw a church in a hotel.

After a mix-up with the tickets, we got home safely. It was good to be back. Everyone met and talked about what a good time they had and how much they are looking forward to next year.

ISSUES

Keeping Up in America

by David Harman

"Learn them to read the Scriptures, and be conversant therein," the Reverend John Cotton urged his Boston parishioners in a 1656 homily on child rearing. "Reading brings much benefit to little Children."

"Benefit" was an understatement. In the harsh moral universe of Cotton's New England Puritans, ignorance was no excuse for sin: A child who died young (as many did) could expect no mercy in the hereafter merely because he had not been able to read the Bible. Massachusetts' colonial authorities had already acted on the fear that parents were not doing enough to protect their children from the "old deluder Satan." In 1647, nine years before Cotton's sermon, they required every township of 50 families or more to provide a teacher for the young.

Satan may be, in this sense, behind us, but the challenge of making Americans literate is not. Almost any adult born in America today can read enough to satisfy John Cotton; but the preacher set a simple standard. His flock did not need to ponder the meaning of a ballot referendum, or the requirements of a Help Wanted advertisement, or the operating instructions for a word processor—all frequently written by people who may only be semi-literate themselves.

"The ability to understand an unfamiliar text, rather than simply declaim a familiar one," as researchers Daniel P. and Lauren B. Resnick put it, is today's new standard of literacy. That kind of *functional* literacy may seem almost quaint in an age of telephones and TV news, and of computers (with languages of their own) and color-coded cash register keys that make counting or reading almost unnecessary for teenage clerks at fast-food restaurants. Time after time in the past literacy has seemed, for a brief historical moment, redundant, a luxury, not needed by ordinary folk.

Yet those Americans who could not read and write, then as now, became the servants for those who could.

Yet those Americans who could not read and write, then as now, became the servants for those who could; they were sometimes deprived of prosperity and liberty, always of autonomy and knowledge. What will become of today's students who fail to become fluent in the English tongue? Even those who achieve *technological* literacy, staking their futures on a narrow mastery of FORTRAN or UNIX or some other computer language, will be at a disadvantage. Eventually, predicts Robert Pattison of Long Island University, they will wind up working for "English majors from Berkeley and Harvard."

It has been said that we live in an Information Age. The information that is important is not bits and bytes, but ideas and knowledge conveyed in clear English. All this requires a more sophisticated level of literacy. The worker of the future, warns

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David Harman is a professor of education at Teachers College of Columbia University. He is the author of several books including *Adult Illiteracy in the United States* (with Carmen St. John Hunter, 1979) and *Illiteracy: A National Dilemma* (1986). Professor Harman also serves as president of the Institute for Corporate Education.

the National Academy of Sciences, must be "able and willing to learn throughout a lifetime." By that new standard, America probably has nearly half the proportion of illiterates among its population in 1986 than it did in Cotton's time.

Traditional literacy spread rapidly in 17th- and 18th-century America, mostly through church-run schools and through informal education—parents teaching their children, masters teaching their apprentices. But it is unclear just how literate colonial America was. As Americans have been painfully reminded in recent years, schooling and literacy are not always synonymous. And in the days before the Revolution, America's schoolchildren probably spent, at most, three years in the classroom.

As Americans have been painfully reminded in recent years, schooling and literacy are not always synonymous.

By counting the number of men who could sign their name to deeds and other public documents as literate (literacy for women was deemed irrelevant in most of the colonies; for slaves, dangerous), historians have reckoned that literacy in America rose from about 60 percent among the first white male colonists to about 75 percent by 1800. That figure masks a great deal of diversity. City-dwellers were more literate than country folk, Northerners more likely to read and write than Southerners and Westerners, the well-to-do better schooled than the poor. Ninety percent of New Englanders could sign their own names by the time the U.S. Constitution was ratified, yet the U.S. Army found in 1800 that only 58 percent of its recruits, drawn from the lower strata of the population, were literate.

And then one must ask *how* literate? The evidence is contradictory. The farmers, blacksmiths, tanners, and shopkeepers of colonial America did not need or possess a very sophisticated understanding of written material. For the vast majority, literacy probably meant reading the Bible, almanacs, and occasionally, newspapers, but without necessarily being able to make inferences from their reading or to decipher more complicated texts. Historian Carl F. Kaestle of the University of Wisconsin-Madison estimates that perhaps 20 percent of adult male Americans were "sophisticated readers" by the 1760s.

Heeding James Madison

Lawrence A. Cremin of Columbia University takes a more generous view. Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, he notes, "sold a hundred thousand copies within three months of its appearance [in 1776] and possibly as many as a half million in all. That means that one-fifth of the colonial population bought it and a half or more probably read it or heard it read aloud."

"A people who mean to be their own governors," James Madison declared, "must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives."

About one thing there is no doubt. From the start, Americans, for various reasons, *valued* the ability to read and write. "A people who mean to be their own governors," James Madison declared, "must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives. A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both." One Ohio newspaper offered a more mundane rationale in 1839, a variant on the "read to win" theme that nowadays draws thousands of Americans into Evelyn Wood speed-reading courses. A young man who delayed marrying by five years, its editor calculated, would gain 7,300 hours of "mental application," including reading, that would advance his material fortunes later in life. But moral and religious uplift remained the strongest impulse behind the spread of literacy well into the 19th century. As William H. McGuffey warned the young readers of his *Newly Revised Eclectic Second Reader* (1853), "The boys and girls who can not read ... will never know whether they are on the right road [in life] or the wrong one."

No more bare bones

Almost by accident, America's industrialization during the 19th century helped boost literacy rates. Employers in the United States, as in Europe, preferred to hire factory workers who could read and write: These skills were not always needed on the job, but businessmen believed, not unlike John Cotton, that graduates were superior in "moral character" to their unschooled and unlettered peers. Advocates of public education such as Horace Mann of Massachusetts emphasized primary-school graduates' "greater docility and quickness in applying themselves to work" in arguing for an expansion of schooling. Mann and his allies had their way in part because the growth of densely populated cities and factory towns in New England during the 1830s and '40s made mass schooling more economical.*

In 1840, when the U.S. Census Bureau first asked adults whether they were literate, all but nine percent said yes. By 1860, only seven percent admitted to illiteracy. The U.S. Army's records tell another story: They show 35 percent illiteracy among recruits in 1840, declining to seven percent only in 1880. Schooling was showing its effects.

It was the U. S. Army that delivered the first shock to the believers in a literate America.

Or so it seemed. It was the U. S. Army that delivered the first shock to the believers in a literate America. By 1917, when the United States mobilized for World War I, the Army had a new way to test the competence of draftees and recruits: standardized intelligence tests, developed by psychologist Robert Yerkes. Yerkes was astonished to find that 30 percent of the young men, while ostensibly literate, could not read well enough to understand his Alpha test form. Public reaction was muted by the fact that many of the near-illiterates were Southern blacks, hence ill-schooled, but the stage had been set in America for a new definition of literacy.

Already the "old bare bones" notion of literacy as a matter of knowing your ABCs and the Bible had been stretched. At Ellis Island, more and more immigrants were arriving from the poor countries of Southern Europe, illiterate in their own languages, not to mention English. More than ever, the newcomers were also unfamiliar with the workings of democracy. Only then did the nation's political leaders begin to view the Founding Fathers' call for an informed citizenry, literate in

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* As before, Massachusetts led the way. It had established the first common schools in 1647, but it was not until 1800 that the state allowed local school districts to levy taxes. Most of the existing states followed suit by the time of the Civil War. Compulsory attendance was slower in coming. Massachusetts was the pioneer again, requiring as early as 1852 that parents send their children to school; more than 50 years passed before Mississippi made compulsory education universal. Because schooling was co-educational, the male-female literacy gap quickly closed.

English, as a social imperative. "There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism," former President Theodore Roosevelt warned in 1915. And steel magnate Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919), convinced that free libraries were "the best agencies for improving the masses of people," dipped into his vast fortune to help create 2,500 new public libraries.

President Herbert C. Hoover launched a U.S. Advisory Committee on National Illiteracy in 1929 to study and publicize the problem, but, like Hoover himself, it was swamped by the Great Depression. And with "one-third of a nation" ill-fed and ill-clad, more important matters filled Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal agenda. It took another world war to bring illiteracy back to the forefront. Early in 1941, before Pearl Harbor, the Army declared that it would reject draftees who failed a fourth-grade equivalency test; within a year, 433,000 men otherwise fit for duty were in civvies thanks to the test. In the summer of 1942, the Army relented, deciding that any illiterate who could understand spoken English and follow basic oral instructions was good enough to wear khaki and serve under the flag.

27 million functional illiterates?

After World War II, attention shifted to children's ability to read and write.

After World War II, attention shifted to children's ability to read and write. Rudolf Flesch, an emigre writer and education specialist, designed the first modern "readability" formulas that made it possible to gauge the level of reading ability required by children's textbooks. By measuring the length of words and sentences, Flesch could determine whether they were written for comprehension at a fourth-, fifth-, or sixth-grade level. In 1955, he authored *Why Johnny Can't Read*, a best seller that sparked a debate between advocates of instruction in phonics ("sounding out" words letter-by-letter) and the prevailing "look-say" method (recognizing whole words) that continues today.* Look-say not only sounded Chinese but required students to learn English (by memorizing whole words) as if it *were* Chinese. "Do you know," Flesch declared, "that the teaching of reading never was a problem anywhere in the world until the United States switched to the present method?"

Only during the past two decades has adult illiteracy aroused the sustained public concern in peacetime.

Only during the past two decades has adult illiteracy aroused the sustained public concern in peacetime. "Adult literacy seems to present an ever growing challenge," writes Harvard's Jeanne S. Chall, "greater perhaps than the acknowledged challenge of literacy among those still in school."

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that the number of *functional* illiterates grows by 2.3 million every year: some 1.3 million legal and illegal immigrants, 850,000 high school dropouts, and another 150,000 "pushouts" who graduate with inadequate reading and writing skills.

All told, as many as 27 million Americans over age 16—nearly 15 percent of the adult population—may be functionally illiterate today.* Another 45 million are

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* A dissatisfied Flesch published *Why Johnny Still Can't Read* in 1981, charging that educators are still ignoring phonics. But most U.S. schools today use a mixture of phonics and look-say instruction.

"marginally competent," reading below the 12th grade level. To varying degrees, all are handicapped as citizens, parents, and workers.

More than a decade ago, the U.S. Senate's Select Committee on Equal Education Opportunity put the cost of such slippage to the U.S. economy—in reduced labor productivity, trimmed tax revenues, higher social outlays— at $237 billion annually. (Today, the burden of illiteracy in terms of unemployment and welfare benefits alone is about $12 billion.) What costs Americans pay in terms of the nation's politics and civic life are not measurable.

Straining to read the news

The 1840 sort of literacy does not suffice to master the details of contemporary American life.

However, the old standards no longer apply. The 1840 sort of literacy does not suffice to master the details of contemporary American life. Just filling out federal income tax forms, for example, requires a 12th-grade education. And, if individuals are to prosper, literacy means more than just getting by. "If we are literate in 20th-century America," writes Harvard's Patricia Albjerg Graham, "we expand the ways in which we can learn, understand, and appreciate the world around us. [Literacy permits] us to become more autonomous individuals, less circumscribed by the conditions of social class, sex, and ethnicity into which we are born." On a practical level, getting ahead in the worlds of work, whether that world is an insurance company's clerical office or an oil company's executive suite, requires a high level of literacy.

Most specialists agree that an eighth-grade reading ability is the minimum level of functional literacy. Twenty states now require students to pass an eighth-grade competency test to qualify for a high school diploma. This is a modest standard: the *New York Times, Time* and *Newsweek* are written at a 10th- to 12th-grade level. Jeanne Chall cites the case of a notice she received from the New England Telephone Company. In short sentences, it told customers how to determine whether malfunctions originated in the equipment or the telephone line. Yet, according to Chall's readability formula, a ninth- or 10th-grade level of reading ability was needed to understand the notice. "For about 30 to 40 percent [of the customers] it might as will have been written in Greek or Latin."

Pegging functional literacy to an eighth-grade reading ability leaves many ambiguities. Specialists are not certain, for example, whether the skills that an eighth grader needs to pass a competency test are the same as those that a worker needs on the job. More troublesome is that most estimates of functional illiteracy are based on data on the number of years of schooling adults have completed, not on actual tests of their abilities. And, as educators well know, merely completing the eighth grade does not mean performing thereafter at that level. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 35 percent of today's 13-year-olds (mostly in eighth grade) read just above a "basic" level.

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* Opinion is by no means unanimous. A National Assessment of Educational Progress study due to be published this spring will probably posit a much lower level of functional illiteracy. In *Illiterate America* (1985) teacher-activist Jonathan Kozol endorses an eighth grade standard but estimates that 60 million adults fail to meet it. Jeanne Chall argues that a 12th-grade level is the minimum acceptable standard: Some 72 million adults fall below it.

One major study does roughly confirm the estimate of 27 million functional illiterates. After testing 7,500 adults on their ability to accomplish everyday tasks—reading the label of an aspirin bottle, following the directions for cooking a TV dinner, writing a check—University of Texas researchers in 1975 put the number of functional illiterates nationwide at 23 million.

Dropping out

The majority of these people are poor and/or black or Hispanic, residents of the rural South or Northern cities. The University of Texas researchers found that 44 percent of the blacks they tested and 16 percent of the whites were functionally illiterate. "Eighty-five percent of juveniles who come before the courts are functionally illiterate," writes Jonathan Kozol. "Half the heads of households classified below the poverty line by federal standards cannot read an eighth-grade book. Over one-third of mothers who receive support from welfare are functionally illiterate. Of eight million unemployed adults, four to six million lack the skills to be retrained for hi-tech jobs."

A large number of the nation's functional illiterates are high school dropouts. Among adults over 25, nearly 17 percent of blacks and 31 percent of Hispanics left school before the eighth grade. Millions more stayed in school a few more years but never reached an eighth-grade reading level. In 10 Southern states, more than 40 percent of the adult population, white and black, are dropouts. Happily, overall dropout rates (now about 25 percent) have been falling fast during recent decades, but they remain high among blacks and Hispanics in city schools, auguring ill for the future progress of these minorities.

Functional illiteracy tends to be passed from generation to generation—illiterate parents cannot read to their children, help them with their homework, or introduce them to the world of books. The NAEP reports that youngsters whose parents failed are nearly twice as likely as their peers to be functionally illiterate.

Functional illiteracy tends to be passed from generation to generation.

Reflecting on the U.S. Army's experience with illiterates, an American educator wrote: "An overwhelming majority of these soldiers entered school, attended the primary grades where reading is taught, and had been taught to read. Yet, when as adults they were examined, they were unable to read readily such simple material as that of a daily newspaper." The educator was May Ayres Burgess, writing in 1921 about the Army's experience with the Alpha tests of draftees during the First World War. Complaints like hers had been heard before in American history, and they are being repeated today.

In 1986, as we have noted, most of the nation's 2.3 million new adult functional illiterates are either immigrants or dropouts. But that is not to say that the schools are blameless. According to the NAEP, one million children between the ages of 12 and 17 now read below a fourth-grade level. Among minority groups, the problems are more severe: 41 percent of black 17-year-olds (and eight percent of their white peers) are functionally illiterate, hence not likely to escape from the underclass.

There are signs everywhere that such data understate the extent of the problem, that many more youths—white, black, and Hispanic—do not read well enough to make their own way in American society. Of nearly 1,400 colleges and universities surveyed recently, 84 percent had found it necessary to create remedial reading, writing, and math programs. Big Business spends millions of dollars every year on "job training," often merely a euphemism for "bone head" English courses. The American Telephone and Telegraph Company bankrolls $6 million worth of remedial education for 14,000 employees. The Polaroid Corporation teaches engineers bound for management positions how to read nontechnical material. "They never learned to scan. They don't know you can read a newspaper differently from a book or that you can read just *parts* of a book," said a company official.

Reading Jane Fonda

Mastering the technique of reading is no guarantee of understanding the substance of what is read. That requires *cultural* literacy. Most high school seniors can probably "decode" *Time*, but one wonders how much of it they understand. A 1985 study of 17-year-olds by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) found that one-half did not recognize the names of Josef Stalin or Winston Churchill. One-third could not point to "Great Britain, *or* France, *or* West Germany, *on a map of Europe*." The NEH did not ask its young subjects whether they knew who Mikhail S. Gorbachev and Margaret Thatcher were, but chances are that the answers would have been discouraging. Daily newspaper circulation has remained stagnant at about 62 million copies since 1970, while the nation's population has grown. At least one-fourth of America's 86 million households appear to go without a newspaper.

Most high school seniors can probably "decode"* Time*, but one wonders how much of it they understand.

U.S. book publishers are selling more books per capita than ever before—output totals 3.5 million copies daily—but if Jane Fonda's best-selling *Workout Book* is any guide, not many of these exercise the mind very much. The book trade's biggest sellers overall—the Gothic novels and mysteries and romances sold in drugstores and supermarkets—are mostly written at a seventh- or eighth-grade level.

Even with this wide selection of light fare, 29 percent of all 16- to 21-year-olds, according to a survey by the Book Industry Study Group, say that they do not read books at all.

Along with functional illiterates such "aliterates" do manage to scrape by. Most are gainfully employed, active members of society, even if their lives are complicated or their futures dimmed. *Glamour* magazine recently reported the case of a successful 29-year-old real estate broker hampered by an eighth-grade reading ability. "I'm constantly with customers who use words that go over my head. I often have to ask them to expand on what they just said. If I can't manipulate them into saying things in words I understand, I'm lost." Her fiancé helped her read letters and contracts. "You have to be careful not to get into situations where it would leak out or be with people that would—ah—make it show," said an illiterate Vermont farmer. "You always try to act intelligent, act like you knew everything.... If somebody give something to read, you make believe you read it and you must make out like you knew everything that there was on there ... and most of the time you could. It's kinda like show biz."

"Illiterates become the greatest actors in the world," noted Arthur Colby, president of Literacy Volunteers of America.

Use it or lose it

Colby's organization is one of many around the country that try to help functional illiterates. But widespread literacy training for civilian adults is a relatively new phenomenon. President Lyndon B. Johnson, calling functional illiteracy "a national tragedy," got Washington involved when he launched the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program in 1964 as part of his Great Society. Today, Washington spends $100 million (matched by $200 million from the states) for several kinds of ABE programs: adult elementary and high school equivalency classes, as well as English as a Second Language instruction. All told, ABE enrolls some 2.6 million adults annually.

In 1970, Commissioner of Education James E. Allen, Jr., launched an ambitious national "Right to Read" effort for illiterates of all ages, but Allen was fired for his public opposition to President Nixon's incursion into Cambodia; his educational "moonshot for the '70s" never really got off the launch pad. In a September 7, 1983, speech marking International Literacy Day, President Reagan called for "a united effort" to eliminate adult functional illiteracy in America. Yet Washington has not chipped in any more money for the effort so far.

The private sector sponsors hundreds of literacy programs. Literacy Volunteers of America (founded in 1962) and Laubach Literacy International (1930) are the two biggest charitable efforts aimed at adult illiterates. They enroll some 75,000 students annually. Community colleges, local public libraries, churches, community-based education and development organizations (with a mixture of private and government support), corporations, and labor unions do substantial work in the field. All told, private and public literacy efforts spend less than $1 billion annually (versus $90 billion for higher education) and reach 4.5 to 6 million people.

Although perhaps one-fifth of America's adult illiterates enroll in these programs every year (not counting those who need help to climb from an eighth- to a 12th-grade level), many will have to stay in for several years to learn to read and write effectively. Drop-out rates are often very high—over 50 percent in some classes. And among graduates, there is a disturbing tendency to lapse back into illiteracy, as the ability to read and write atrophies from disuse once classes end.

What works? The American military has the longest experience with combating adult illiteracy, and even it has found no magic formulas. The switch to an all-volunteer Army made the search more desperate: From 10 percent in 1975, the proportion of functionally illiterate recruits jumped to 31 percent in 1981. (By 1985, thanks in part to high civilian unemployment that improved the quality of recruits, the rate dropped to nine percent.) The Army achieved its greatest success with

What works? The American military has the longest experience with combating adult illiteracy, and even it has found no magic formulas.

efforts like FLIT (Functional Literacy Training)—an intensive six-week course using operating manuals and other written material that soldiers actually need to use in the line of duty.

The need to read

The same kind of approach seems to work best in the civilian world. Recently, a New York City Teamsters Union local sponsored a 10-week literacy course for card-carrying municipal exterminators. It focused on teaching the students what they needed to know to pass a certification exam and function in their jobs. Perhaps as important, the teachers were exterminators themselves, peers of the students. The result: few dropouts and a 100 percent success rate on the test for graduates.

Unfortunately, the Teamsters example is the exception rather than the rule. The government's ABE programs and many others typically use middle-class instructors and rather abstract texts. Lower-class students who see few links between what is being taught (using texts like *Memories of East Utica*) and what they consider important (e.g., writing resumes, comparing life insurance policies) often grow discouraged and drop out. Adds McGill University's Rose-Marie Weber, "Teachers [in adult literacy courses] often complain about the students' apparent lack of motivation, their negative attitudes toward learning, and their failure to recognize the long-term value of literacy skills."

Weber's observation suggests why the "all-out literacy war" that some specialists advocate would be unrealistic. Literacy is not just a simple mechanical skill that people can learn and stow away. It is almost a way of life, requiring constant exercise and the acquisition of new knowledge. The x-ray technician or computer repairman who knows how to read but ignores newspapers and books and turns on the television set when he gets home is not going to achieve or sustain a high level of literacy.

Literacy is not just a simple mechanical skill that people can learn and stow away. It is almost a way of life.

Every generation seems to face its own obstacles to literacy. For the Puritans, one barrier was simply the cost and difficulty of reading by candlelight; for 19th-century Americans, the temptation to leave school to go to work. Today, we lack neither the light nor leisure, and the "need to read" is stronger than ever. At the very least, every citizen ought to be able to learn *how* to read and to acquire the knowledge to know *what* he is reading.

Improving the quality of U.S. public education is an obvious (albeit expensive) first step: There is no logical reason why tax-supported high schools in America should produce graduates who can not read and write at a 12th-grade level. Continuing to do so merely consigns another generation of youths, especially low-income youths, to the bottom rungs of the economic ladder. Federal backing for successful local, "community based" literacy efforts for adults, like those of the Teamsters, San Antonio's Barrio Education Project, and the Bronx Educational Services Program, is also needed. Yet many realities of modern life—the increasing influx of unlettered immigrants, the rising literacy standards, and television's continuing competition with the printed word for American's attention—suggest that functional illiteracy, like the poor, will always be with us.

Teaching is Remembering

by Michael Holzman

The intercom buzzed.
"Yes?"
"Olga Something on line one."
"Thanks."
It was a few days before the spring final examination for Composition 101. I was in my normal condition for the occasion: exhausted, nervous, and bored. It's hard to maintain all three of these at the same time, but I understand that night nurses and soldiers on guard duty are familiar with the required techniques. Olga Something was a CETA clerk with the County—I thought that was what she said—and wanted me to help with writing there. Oh yes, happy to, but a little busy right now, could you call back in ten days?

The intercom buzzed.
"Yes?"
"That Olga person on line one."
"Really?"
People in Los Angeles don't usually call back when they say they will; it must be the Hollywood influence. Yet here was Olga, right on schedule, calling back on the tenth day. It turned out that she was not a CETA clerk. She was working the California Conservation Corps, Jerry Brown's reincarnation of the Depression era Civilian Conservation Corps. Could she talk with me about teaching the Corpsmembers to write? Sure, the grades were in and I had nearly forgotten about being exhausted, nervous, and bored. I found Irene and Betty and told them that Olga Something would be talking with us the next day, about basic writing, I thought. (Irene Clark is Director of our Writing Center, Betty Bamberg is Director of the USC/California Writing Project—they are among the usual suspects for meetings like this.)

Olga told us that the new CCC employs people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three at the minimum wage on one-year contacts. They clear brush, fight fires, work at emergency sites, are kept to fairly severe work discipline. There are sixty at the Los Angeles Urban Center of the CCC, which happens to be just across the street from USC. Bruce Saito, the Director there, had agreed to include a literacy component in his daily schedule. Half the Corps members were without high school diplomas, one third were Hispanic, ten or so are recent immigrants from South East Asia. Would we teach them how to read and write better?

Oh, sure, nothing better to do, have Mr. Saito send me an official letter. We bureaucrats always want official letters.

After the meeting, Betty said: "Do you know who that was?"

"Ah, didn't she say her name was Olga Connolly?"

"She's the Czech athlete who eloped with an American at the 1956 Olympics."

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Michael Holzman was formerly a member of the English department at the University of Southern California and now teaches and works at the Institute for Literacy Studies at Lehman College in Bronx, New York.

I later learned that Olga had stopped competing in the Olympics after her fifth participation in the Games. And she hadn't really eloped. Anyway, she had worked on projects for inner-city youth, worked (indeed) with CETA, and was now a consultant to the California Conservation Corps.

"This is Michael Holzman." They all stared at me. I'm not used to this sort of thing. Mostly I write memoranda and make speeches to teachers.

The next morning, at 7:30, we went over the the CCC operation, which is housed in an old National Guard Armory. We all admired the high ceilings. Then Bruce found us and took us into the room where the Corpsmembers were. They wore khaki uniforms, sat with their arms folded, stared at us. Olga helped a lot. She said: "This is Michael Holzman." They all stared at me. I'm not used to this sort of thing. Mostly I write memoranda and make speeches to teachers. "The People" is a nice concept, but hard to face at 7:30 a.m. in the form of dozens of very strong black and brown young adults. The uniforms also did not help. Were they prisoners, soldiers, cops? There was nothing to be done. I talked about how important it is to know how to read and write. Then I asked for questions. Three Corpsmembers asked the same questions: "When do we start?" I could deal with that. We would form small groups and begin writing. Betty gave me a "You could have warned me" look, shrugged, and took eight Corpsmembers off in search of a room with a table. Mr. Saito's letter arrived the following Monday; classes started Tuesday.

Wednesday morning I met Steve Krashen in the park between the Hall of Humanities and the Administration building (this is my usual locale, symbolically). I told him about the CCC. He said: "You're in over your head."

"I know."

"What are you going to do?"

"Round up some good teachers, use small groups—individual tutorials if any of the CCC people turn out to be actually illiterate."

"Let me know how it goes."

"Sure."

We found ten instructors for the sixty CCC people. We put those Corpsmembers who could not speak English into one group (they named themselves "The Internationals;" ESL apparently has a pejorative meaning) and grouped the others at random. During the second meeting we found one person who could only read his own name and the word "the." At the next meeting we found three more. We put two of these students with Irene, two with another instructor, improvised materials. (We actually had some good things on hand that had been developed to help the athletics department.) In the second week of the collaboration between the CCC and our writing instructors something rather odd happened. I didn't understand it at first. It began when twenty of the CCC people had been sent to the Colorado River to sandbag resorts and houses there. That left some of our groups with six students, some with one or two. When I tried to rearrange people, to even out the groups at four, the students resisted. They wanted to stay with their particular instructors. "Wanted" is a mild way of putting it. They refused to be regrouped. I found this a bit annoying, but when the instructors sided with the students there was nothing that I could do about it, no matter how strong my drive toward organization symmetry. I decided to make the best of a bad deal and went off to think about the meaning of this resistance. Just calling it "resistance" made me feel better; it sounded vaguely clinical, made me feel in intellectual if not bureaucratic control of the matter.

The next day I was talking to a secondary-school teacher who specializes in teaching basic reading to students at a high school just off campus, that is, near Watts. I told her about our CCC class and asked how it happened that so many of these young people had been through the public schools but, like her students, had learned little.

"You know," she said, "the classes are so large and the school must do so many different things. And you can't isolate the children from the community. Truancy is such a big problem."

Truancy. Absenteeism. If the students are not in school, they can hardly be taught much.

"At my school the attrition rate is 135 percent a year. And you hardly ever have more than four or five students in the class three days running. The others come and go."

And, in spite of the best efforts of the teachers, they are forgotten. The teachers, naturally enough (with five classes of thirty or forty students each day), concentrate on the students who are there, not those who are absent. When does this start? At the beginning. We like to believe that in the United States every eight-year-old is free to go to school. This is true for students from Watts and for students from Beverly Hills. All have equal opportunities. Some have home environments which encourage schooling; some have home environments which are indifferent to it; in some home environments unemployment among young adult males is over fifty percent, violence is endemic, twelve-year-old girls become prostitutes, gangs recruit in the junior high school corridors. By fourth grade matters are sufficiently advanced for the less fortunate children; tracking will take care of the rest. Students who have missed a crucial week or two of work on reading or writing are relegated to less intensively supervised parts of the educational system. They grow bored. They learn little after that. They are forgotten.

Students who have missed a crucial week or two of work on reading or writing are relegated to less intensively supervised parts of the educational system.

Which brought me back to my stubborn CCC students. Their reluctance to be separated from their instructors was not whimsical or arbitrary. They had been forgotten before; they did not wish to be forgotten again. The seemingly arbitrary nature of the their identification with instructors whom they had barely met simply testified to the intensity of their feelings. If Doug Cazort or Judith Rodby knew their names, seemed interested in their lives and education, that was sufficient—it was practically unique in their experience. No wonder that they were unwilling to risk a new organization, risk exposure to a new representative of middle-class society. The evidence of their own experience was that such a new person would not care about them. Why take risks?

It is not necessary to analyze the consequences of neglect from an ethical or humanitarian angle. The economic context will suffice. The most advanced sectors of the industrialized world now are those which produce and distribute not goods but information. In the United States, where these changes are not cushioned or concealed by traditional social structures or consistent state intervention, the result is the obsolescence of entire industries, and, in a movement parallel to that in the beginning of the nineteenth century, of entire categories of workers. Where the development of mass production eliminated the need for skilled craftspersons (weavers, for instance) in favor of unskilled workers and machines, now it is the unskilled and semi-skilled workers who are becoming superfluous. The bottom steps of the social ladder have been sawn off.

Let me give a very recent example of this. A common path for social advancement in the middle part of the twentieth century was through clerical work, the most basic type of which might be taken as that of a bank teller. Even a recent emigrant with basic English skills could stand at a bank corner eight hours a day, accepting deposits, certifying withdrawals. Eventually this might lead to the possibility of the acquisition of other, more complex skills, of other, more highly paid work. In just the last two years many of these positions have been eliminated by the introduction of machines to perform those basic tasks. Very soon, for all practical purposes, there will be no entry level positions for unskilled white collar workers in banking. One can see that similar changes will occur in other service industries. (At one time it was thought that the service industries would employ those "freed" by the disappearance of heavy manufacturing and extraction industries, but this is less and less likely.) From one point of view this is a very good thing indeed. Gradually the white collar equivalent of ditch digging will be eliminated. There will be no need to employ hundreds of thousands of people to spend their days in mindless, repetitive tasks. As heavy earth moving equipment has freed men (for the most part) from one type of physical drudgery, so automated bank tellers, that is, the applications of computing to the service aspects of information transfer, will free women and men from a type of mental drudgery.

The problem here, for a society like ours, is that those menial white collar jobs were a form of education, a preparation for the slightly more interesting work to be encountered elsewhere in the bank, say. As we will probably not be willing to consider one of those north European solutions (such as that which offered the entire last generation of Belgian coal miners early retirement, without regard to age), we have two alternatives: permanent unemployment for those population groups not educationally equipped to find work in the new economy, or more investment in education. The former choice is much more costly than the latter. It involves extensive construction of prisons, epidemic control, unemployment benefits, welfare payments, higher taxes, higher crime rates, shorter lives. There is not much that need be said about the prospect of condemning a large part of the population to marginalization, except, perhaps, to comment on the word itself. What sort of margin is it that contains so much of the human "text" of society? We are talking about a margin only in the sense that these are people at the margins of the attention of those who plan society.

One significant problem which Olga has told me about is that of the disincentives from education for traditionally educationally disadvantaged groups.

One significant problem which Olga has told me about is that of the disincentives from education for traditionally educationally disadvantaged groups. There are already many educational institutions available for those interested in basic education. There are, for instance, high schools, both regular and adult, continuation and trade. There are community colleges. If Rex Johnson or Nguyen duc Tuan wishes to improve his employment opportunities by learning to read and write in English, or by improving those skills from fourth-grade level to a point where they are useful in the emerging information society, all that Johnson or Nguyen need do is enroll in a free or nearly free course. That is all, but, as with elementary education, in some cases it is too much.

Let us think about Johnson for a minute. He was born in Los Angeles nearly twenty years ago. He is black. He grew up in an extended household composed of his mother, grandmother, and a number of brothers, sisters, half-brothers, cousins. (You have heard this story before.) No one he knows has a college degree. There are virtually no books in his house, virtually no reading materials of any kind. None of his friends has a job that required anything more than fourth grade literacy skills (of course, not many people he knows have jobs at all). In fourth grade he missed his week or two of school (a younger sister was ill and had to be looked after, his mother was beat up by the man who had been living with them, there was a gang war in the neighborhood and it was unsafe to go to school). That left him a bit behind on his reading and writing skills, so he was bored for the rest of the year, not understanding the lessons. The teacher tried to help, but there were those thirty-eight other children in the class, many of whom were more in need of personal attention than Rex. Rex never learned much more in school, attended irregularly, became more and more involved with gangs, or simply began drinking and taking drugs. One of his stepfathers had him sent to jail as an incorrigible ("It will do him good"). After that it was hard for him to get jobs, with no skills and a jail record and the habit of not showing up places when he felt like doing something else. How likely is it that Rex, at nineteen, will suddenly decide to go to night school? And if he goes, what is it that he will want to be taught? He already knows how to read and write—ask him.

Olga says that people like Rex live in a world that is at once magical and violent. The violence is real.

Olga says that people like Rex live in a world that is at once magical and violent. The violence is real. They get shot or stabbed as frequently as middle-class people get in automobile accidents. Women in Rex's world get beat up frequently, get pregnant and abandoned, have trouble holding jobs or finishing school. The view that Rex and his friends have of the world that they do not live in, the world they see on television and in the movies, is magical in a pernicious way. In that magical world things are not connected. One day you are a typical high-school student, the next you have a contract from a professional football team. There is a link between this television magic and street violence, a link that makes the magic in a sense believable. It is that in Rex's everyday world the transitions are television sudden, if always negative. One day you are a typical high school student, the next you are dead. Rex and his friends live in a domestic Third World, one which appears to have been designed by Gabriel Garcia Marquez but has actually been designed by those of us who work in consciousness industries. If life itself is actually so precarious, it is not unreasonable to believe that positive changes also (if they can occur) will be characterized by sudden and inexplicable transformations. If Rex goes to night school, it is more likely that he will wish to study "computers" than reading. Computers are magic. The problem for those who would intervene in this world, benevolently, is to remove the magic, and not just from computers, to reveal the causal links between events. This must be done before any technical education can be accomplished (and I am counting literacy here as a technique, although not invidiously, as I have elsewhere). General knowledge, Olga told us, must precede literacy. If it does not, the acquisition of literacy literally makes no sense. Why read if you believe that it is sheer chance which will either kill you or make you rich?

I think that the very relentlessness of the negatively magical vision of everyday life which possesses Rex and his friends might serve to justify some intervention in the process by which they make their choices. If they are frequently told by television and motion pictures that success in life happens by means of a gun or gratuitous gesture by benevolent millionaires or through the recognition of physical characteristic (not achievements), and they are told by their own senses that failure occurs also without their willing it, by means of random gunfire, arrests, drug impurities, then it is probably not improper for them also to be informed that there are alternatives. That in return for relinquishing the magical explanation of success (or survival), they may find some possibility of survival (or success) through the decidedly non-magical means of education. They have been forgotten by our society, a process of forgetting which is a mode of exclusion. If they are to re-enter society—and not be parasites on it—they must learn that it exists; it must be made non-magical, real.

If they are to re-enter society—and not be parasites on it—they must learn that it exists; it must be made non-magical, real.

This is the purpose of the literacy preparation program that Olga had devised for the CCC. It consists of two areas of education: She (and her friends) tell Rex (and his friends) about the society which is not Hollywood and not Watts. How the water system works. How the stock market works. How a bank works. How the athletic system works (exactly, really, not magically, how one becomes an Olympic or professional athlete). How these matters are connected. And then she has Rex and his friends take an inventory of their own skills, where they can fit into these systems. She asks: "Would you like to be an athlete? What diet do you follow?" And then she teaches them about nutrition. They seem not to have heard about it before, or about simple anatomy, or about the complexities of reproduction. Olga says that "They know nothing about the human body under its skin." This is fairly worrisome, as some already have children, many of whom were born to undernourished mothers (living on widely advertised processed foods: Hostess Ding Dongs for breakfast). Gradually they learn that only part of the world is magical, caught between random violence and fantasy; that the part of the world (our world) that is the source of theirs is not magical at all; there, everything is connected, and, from the point of view of the individual, all these connections begin with literacy.

Olga's approach to the problem of adult illiteracy and semi-literacy showed me that I had been looking in the wrong place for solutions to these problems. I had thought that it was a technical problem, that I would find some procedure that would be applicable. It is not only a procedural problem. Literacy is not a felt need in a magical world. Before we as teachers could apply to them as students the procedures of our professional expertise, they had to become students, and accept us as teachers. The first step is the de-mystification of the world. The second is our willingness to give up the protection of our roles as teachers, to remember each of them as individuals, to agree that our relationships are personal. When I had failed to rebalance the groups, I had learned that in this situation, at the limit of education, teachers are only allowed to be teachers if they are Doug and Betty and the students are Rex and Tran. Relationships between individuals must replace relationships between roles. With such relationships in place, the Corpsmembers *were* learning basic literacy skills, often quite rapidly. Irene reported after three class sessions her illiterate students had progressed from his name and "the" to all three letter words with the vowels "i," "e," and "a." The "Internationals" were talking among themselves in English, which they denied knowing at the beginning of the course.

Literacy is not a felt need in a magical world.

Enrique Valasquez, a recent emigrant from Mexico, had become something of cross between an ethnographer and a native informant, giving me weekly written reports on the progress of Corpsmembers. Some of the black Corpsmembers were pointing out how black dialect features in their writing and asking their instructors how standard English differs. Literacy among unschooled young adults is not entirely a technical problem. It is also, one might say, a motivational problem. One might say that, as one might say that the Civil War was a policy disagreement. They must acquire the motivation to live. Then they can be taught to write better, to read.

Literacy among unschooled young adults is not entirely a technical problem. It is also, one might say, a motivational problem. One might say that, as one might say that the Civil War was a policy disagreement.

We did learn some technical-pedagogical things. About half way through the experimental summer program, Doug Cazort started having his students tape record narratives, then write them down from their recorded "dictation." I thought this was fairly strange at first; our usual procedure with freshmen had been to have them record essays they had already written. Doug explained to me that this reversal was a solution to another problem that we had been worrying about: Most of the Corpsmembers, when asked to write an essay, would write perhaps three words and erase two. It is difficult to finish a composition with this technique. They were apparently operating in accordance with a theory that "correctness" and the avoidance of error is the primary aim of writing. Expression and communication were reserved for speech. We had begun by simply telling them that this is not a correct theory, that Derrida, for instance, would point out that it is a typical instance of logocentricism in Western culture, but this had not made much of an impression. Doug (following Steve Krashen's theoretical lead in this) had found a way to smuggle expression and communication, and thus interest, into writing. The Corpsmembers liked to use the tape recorders, liked to *tell* stories, and did not view the inscription of their own dictation as "writing," in the negatively charged sense that the word had for them. Soon people who had difficulty filling half a page with direct composition were filling two or three pages in an hour class session from their own dictation. Fortunately we had readily available a tape laboratory normally used for foreign language instruction. Many of our students began living there during their hours with us. The more advanced verbal students were particularly attracted to, and helped by, this device.

After a few weeks of our summer job, working with the CCC personnel on what was often, and necessarily, a mutual education project (I now know a bit too much about the phenomenology of prison culture), Bruce Saito asked us to continue literacy education for his Corpsmembers during the academic year. I asked if the Corpsmembers themselves wanted this. They did. That left two more questions: Why should a private university do this? And who would pay?

When the question of money comes up, it is my custom to write a letter to the Vice President of the College, Irwin C. Lieb. The letter got me a meeting with Dr. Lieb. He said that although it was clearly a worthwhile project he did not find in my letter any compelling argument that it was a suitable tack for a university. I advanced the claim that if one is aware of a task that should be done that is not being done, and if one is capable of doing it, one should do it. He responded that budgets are limited, and a university is an institution for higher education and research. I offered the information that there are many CCC centers, that if we developed a significant model for literacy work it could be adapted for work with the CCC and similar groups, that little research had been done in this area. He said he would see our development people for the money and that I should see Steve Krashen about the research.

These poorly educated young people were poorly educated not by chance, but because they had been forgotten by the educational system. Their literacy could be improved if they were remembered.

By the time I met with Dr. Lieb, I felt that we had already accomplished something more than a one-shot effort at improving literacy skills for a random group of educationally handicapped young adults. The observation about the rapidity of small group bonding could be attributed to the origins of the disability itself and to a method for overcoming that disability. These poorly educated young people were poorly educated not by chance, but because they had been forgotten by the educational system. Their literacy could be improved if they were remembered, if particular educators cared about them. I believe that here, as with so many matters, psychological and sociological phenomena form a continuum. If Freire was successful in teaching peasants to read and write by presenting the achievement of literacy in a political context, he did so by persuading them that literacy is one component of a tack involving the transformation of their lives as individuals and as individual representatives of a class. Literacy, in the Third World, can become the locus of hope itself. It is highly unlikely that this particular contextualization of literacy can be widely applied in the United States. (There are exceptions—farm workers, for instance.) The relevant application of Freire's technique is to show individuals that their personal welfare can be enhanced by improvements in their literacy. Since this is a personal matter, direct personal involvement is crucial. The pedagogical instantiation of this theory is that of small tutorials, not classes, and a degree of stability in instructor/student relations. The connection with the CCC gave us a stable student population, and we had learned to emphasize the stability of our instructor/student groups.

The use of tape recordings of verbal texts by the students themselves as the basis for composition is probably not novel, nor is it an answer in itself to the technical questions of adult semi-literacy. It is, though, a demonstration of the richness of the teaching environment as the source for technical and theoretical innovation. In our ESL group Judith was able to achieve significant results by helping her students express that which they wished to express—not, "This is a table" but "The CCC makes us work hard." Why learn to say, to write, words which do not matter? As Steve Krashen tells me at least once a week, only university students will put up with the material in most traditional textbooks. Working with young adults who were certainly living in the real world and who, we learned quickly enough, intensely desired to improve their literacy skills, we spend little time with techniques that satisfy us, but not them. We ask the students to help us design the "curriculum;" we ask them to evaluate the program. We might as well ask; if we do not, they will tell us anyway. It happens to matter to them whether they acquire more survival opportunities.

There are certain skills and resources present in the university not present among the Corpsmembers. These are being assembled by Steve Krashen and others as a research area within our Linguistics Department. Some of the instructors in what has become the USC Model Literacy Project will be graduate students working with Steve on this research. The researchers will learn from the Project; the Project will benefit from the research, and the results, if significant, will be promulgated in the usual ways, particularly by means of the National Writing Project.

We are now generalizing our project for the education of young adults who have not learned what they needed in the schools.

We are now generalizing our project for the education of young adults who have not learned what they needed in the schools and who are not individually motivated to seek out help through established channels. We will work with the local branch of the California Conservation Corps during the 1983-84 academic year to develop this Model Literacy Project that will then be made available to other sites of the California Writing Project and the California Conservation Corps. The CCC will constitute the motivating vehicle for the students, monitoring attendance, etc. The University will provide instructors, classroom space, and some materials. And the USC/ California Writing Project will seek to involve public school teachers in this task, drawing on them for their experience with similar students, asking teachers to teach teachers what we find, what must be done. It is, I believe, particularly elementary school teachers who have much to teach and much to learn, in this matter. Perhaps their involvement with Rex and his friends will help us in our efforts to break this cycle, to minimize the amount of forgetting that occurs in schools.

In a way, the CCC connection came as a gift. The more general problem, the more difficult problem, is that of reaching similar young people without an institutional affiliation. Yet if our project was to be more than the literacy component of the California Conservation Corps, if it were indeed to contribute to what I have romantically called "an epidemic of literacy," we have to find a way to go beyond the Corpsmembers to their brothers and sisters. It seemed an insoluble problem to me. I could think of no organization similar to the CCC. What were we to do—recruit on street corners? I had forgotten about Olga. One morning she said: "I've been walking around the neighborhood talking to people about our Project."

> "What happened?"
> "It was interesting. I'm thinking."
> The next day she said: "I'm going to ask the Corpsmembers."
> Stupid of me—who else was an expert on the matter?

They were ahead of us. They had already told their sisters and brothers and cousins and lovers about the Project. Many were eager to attend our classes. The problem had two parts: letting people know about the Project and selecting those appropriate to join. Both these matters had been taken care of by the Corpsmembers themselves. They had told the community about the Project, and they would select new students. They were proud of what they—we—had done together. They would be responsible in choosing their fellow students. (An unworthy thought about the need for expert recruiting personnel enters here and is quickly assisted to a nearby exit. This is not an employment project for professionals.)

That which is in place now is as follows. Persons new to the Project, whether in the CCC component or the open program, first join us in the enterprise of examining the world as a real, non-magical entity where they have a place directly connected to the rest. Then, often simultaneously, they become part of a literacy group of half a dozen or so, including a literacy teacher from the University. The groups meet three times a week for eight weeks, an hour at a time. If they wish they can enroll in

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additional eight-week terms. The instructors study with the students, learning what is needed to be learned and taught, learning about the world in which the students live. Then they work together with other researchers to perfect techniques of literacy instruction. A student-teacher ratio of six or eight to one is fairly expensive. However, the context is that of welfare payments of four or five thousand dollars a month for a group that size if they are unemployable because of deficient literacy skills. I believe that is a fairly good cost/benefit ratio, if one wants to talk about cost/benefit ratios. I do not. It is a mark of barbarism when a society treats people as if they were things. Things may be forgotten. People must be remembered.

The Politics of Literacy Education

by Hanna Arlene Fingeret

Adult literacy education always has been political — choices about who reads, what they read, and how they use what they read always have been connected to the distribution of power in a society. From ancient times we find literacy systematically denied to those the ruling elite want to maintain in a position of subjugation, and literacy used as a means of social control. This is evident in laws forbidding slaves learning to read, voter registration literacy tests, and the current move to control the content of textbooks on moral grounds.

Literacy ... is defined and created by those in power in a society, and those definitions change as conditions change.

Literacy is not some naturally occurring object, like stone or soil or water or air. It is a social construct — it is defined and created by those in power in a society, and those definitions change as conditions change. Thus, literacy is considered historically and culturally relative; definitions of literacy depend on time and place (although they always are decided upon by those in positions of power). As the definitions shift, membership in the categories of "literate" and "illiterate" changes, and the rewards and stigma attached to membership in each category change as well. Discussion about the relative nature of literacy usually takes place in an academic context, abstract and divorced from present practice. However, I believe that the definitions, categories and criteria are changing right now — and it is up to us to choose our roles, from passive viewers to active participants in the process.

Many of us have been working in adult literacy education since the 1960s when federal legislation first created the Adult Basic Education program; we were operating then in an environment in which it was fashionable to speak of a "social consciousness," and a number of fundamental social issues were addressed through new policies. Education — including literacy skills — was seen as part of the foundation necessary to enable individual social mobility in our society; improvement of the standard of living — an economic issue — and the quality of life — a personal, subjective issue — were national goals.

Illiteracy was a social problem during the 1960s to the extent that it was viewed as contributing to social unrest; the economy was expanding and literacy was viewed as a prerequisite for persons who had been disenfranchised to reap their share of the rewards of a bountiful nation. It was the key to moving up and out of the ghetto, up and out of labor-intensive jobs and up and out of the ranks of the poor. Literacy education was designed to support the expanding economy by moving adults into the "mainstream."

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Then we entered a period called by many, "retrenchment." Funding for literacy programs, always minimal, became scarce. As the economy contracted and the economic status of those in power appeared to be threatened, opportunities for others

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Hanna Arlene Fingeret is Assistant Professor of Adult and Continuing Education at North Carolina State University. She is one of the directors of Literacy South, a training and technical assistance network for literacy practitioners. She is the author of articles on such topics as participatory education and adult learners.

to move in their ranks narrowed. Social programs and issues of social justice no longer had a central place in mainstream political rhetoric.

In the last couple of years the context has changed again. The role of literacy in supporting economic development once more is being highlighted; talk about adult literacy education once more is being transformed into political capital. But there are some important differences from twenty years ago.

I know that you are all aware of the current line of reasoning that places adults who need to develop their literacy skills in a causal relationship to current economic problems. These adults, presumed to be unable to work in the workplaces of the future, keep America from ascending to the top of the new post-industrial, technological age, global order. Most obviously, these arguments ignore the realities of social class and social structure. They also ignore the complex web of forces contributing to the United States' present economic problems — adults who cannot read and write well are by far more the victims of these forces than their cause! Nonetheless, the tight connection established between literacy and economic development provides the framework within which we see the current attention to literacy education.

However, today's political talk about literacy is not about "empowerment" of people who are poor and disenfranchised; it is about maintaining the present distribution of wealth and power in America and, even more, across the planet. The claim is being made that the skills needed for the lowest level of jobs has shifted — or is in the process of shifting. This is not about literacy for social mobility, but it is literacy for basic entry-level employment. These arguments focus only secondarily on improving the quality of life for individuals and communities; primarily they emphasize maintaining the pre-existing standard of living in America. In other words, in the center of this talk of change and the future lies the image of the status quo.

But how can this be? Persons who have been denied power and devalued are the focus of efforts to provide them with tools that provide access to power — if only functional power by virtue of their now being able to do things they could not do previously. These efforts potentially undermine literacy as a tool of the power elite — *but* this attention to literacy is oriented to supporting the existing power structure rather than to redistributing power in our society. Thus, a dilemma is posed — there seems to be a fundamental underlying contradiction — because of the potential social consequences of universal literacy.

Our challenge is to find ways to take advantage of new opportunities, but, at the same time, not to add to the problem by supporting these false and destructive stereotypes.

As a result, we must be sensitive to a number of ways in which any potential redistribution of power — and therefore, true literacy — is being undermined. First, nonliterate adults are taught that they are the problem through the continued propagation of destructive stereotypes and assumptions, including: that nonliterate adults cannot inform themselves about political, social and economic issues; that they must rely upon the help of others to negotiate commonplace daily life tasks; that they are swayed easily by propaganda and demagoguery; and that they are socially isolated, alienated, and impotent. Most fundamentally, nonliterate adults are viewed as unable to grow and learn and barely able to cope with daily life. *Our challenge is to find ways to take advantage of new opportunities but, at the same time, not to add to* *the problem* by supporting these false and destructive stereotypes, and to create a more constructive, respectful and potent view of nonliterate adults.

We must not lose sight of the importance of collaboration of learners — in program development and instruction.

Second, we must understand that American mainstream culture still tends to equate nonliteracy with "primitive," undeveloped, or simply incapable minds. Nonliterate adults are viewed as needing to be cared for, much as young children are seen as being dependent on adults, rather than as being able to participate as equals in decisions about their lives. Therefore, they are not viewed as having an active role in creating programs to meet their needs, but rather as passive recipients of service. It is difficult to transcend thousands of years of social conditioning to remember that literacy does not define dependency. Nonetheless, we must not lose sight of the importance of collaboration of learners — in program development and instruction — and we must work hard to make collaboration a cornerstone of literacy efforts.

We must remain committed to working with those adults who have the most minimal skills.

Third, we are moving away from a dichotomy between literacy and illiteracy to a notion of continuing literacy development. I think this is a positive movement, on the whole, but it legitimizes using "literacy" resources to work with adults whose skills already may be fairly sophisticated, but, in the context of a certain set of job demands, may require still greater development. These are adults already established in the mainstream society and participating at a fairly high level. The danger is that resources will be diverted from those with fewer skills, using the justification that it is too resource intensive to connect them to the available employment opportunities. *We must remain committed to working with those adults who have the most minimal skills.* Although we have to think in terms of lifelong literacy development — for all of us — as part of our lifelong learning process, we also have to remember that the potential consequences of such development may be more threatening when they include helping previously nonliterate adults find their voice as a political constituency.

Fourth, finally there appears to be widespread recognition of the important role of background knowledge and context for effective teaching and learning. However, in many instances this is being narrowly translated into prescriptive workplace literacy programs, and adults' family, personal and civic lives, their most fundamental contexts, often are dismissed. Such workplace literacy programs flirt with the danger of simply training adults for specific tasks rather than helping them learn to read, write, solve problems, and continue learning. *We need to develop a more politicized understanding of workplace literacy*, incorporating a critical perspective on power relationships in the workplace and the functions of literacy in the relationship between workers and their employers, as well as integrating a far more complex definition of functional context.

Of course, any action on the part of literacy educators presupposes a proactive stance with local, state and federal policy makers. Many of us are feeling a bit overwhelmed these days with the activity in our local areas, our states and the federal level. It is difficult, often, simply to feel informed about it, never mind to feel that it is possible to take a role in shaping it. Many of us entered this field primarily because we care about people, about service and education, about the quality of life and social justice, but we were drawn to practice rather than to policy making. For many years, we felt that we could afford to ignore advocacy roles, and that we could ignore each other.

These days are over. Our profession is being redefined for us — by the media, by chambers of commerce, by mayors and governors and legislators and business owners — and the process will continue because it is viewed as related to the quality of life for mainstream America. We must rise to this challenge intelligently, politically, and with a generous spirit of collaboration.

Policy makers, or those working in local, state or federal government positions, have been struggling to understand that literacy is more than a set of reading and writing skills and that literacy development is a complex issue requiring far more than a "quick fix" if there is to be any real change. Unfortunately, dealing with complicated issues in a complicated way is not particularly among the strengths of most governors!

Therefore, the challenge for those who can influence the distribution of resources is to find some way to make a serious, long-term commitment to addressing literacy development as a complex issue — to approach it in a comprehensive way, to develop comprehensive policies. It is time to stop putting social issues in competition with each other — the "social issue of the year" approach has got to go — and to begin developing policies that reflect the inter-relatedness of all of these issues.

We all must work together to promote a broad notion of literacy that embraces the growth of the human spirit, recognizing full participation in the economy will accompany such personal growth.

The current mainstream orientation to literacy depicts nonliterate adults as different — fundamentally different — and not OK. True progress in literacy will only come, however, when we realize that we're all folks, in the end. We all must work together to promote a broad notion of literacy that embraces the growth of the human spirit, recognizing full participation in the economy will accompany such personal growth.

Only when we focus on what we share in common — literacy educators from all organizations, policy makers, learners — and find the courage to name and confront our differences, only then can we begin reconstructing the politics of adult literacy education in America.

Four Poets:

Modern Poetry in the Adult Literacy Classroom

by Francis E. Kazemek and Pat Rigg

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As teachers and tutors of adults who are becoming literate, we have been quite concerned with finding materials for these people. Most commercial materials focus on such "functional" literacy skills as reading want ads and filling out job applications (Rigg and Kazemek, 1985), which are restrictive in at least two senses: These materials narrow rather than enlarge a student's view of literacy; and the snippets of language they display are bereft of verve or grace.

We think that poetry offers a gold mine of materials for adult literacy students. In this article we describe four poets whose work we have used with literacy students, and we report on the basic techniques of using poetry.

Why poetry?

There are several reasons for using poetry with adult literacy students. First, it opens a world, or a view of the world, that has been closed for many of them. Our adult students tell us that the written assignments they had in school were always what Britton (1982) calls *transactional*, that is, using language to get something done. Typical assignments were filling in the blanks, underlining subjects and verbs, and drawing lines from words in a list to definitions in a parallel column. Sometimes they wrote book reports, and at least once a year a report on their summer vacation; but these assignments too were transactional.

The reading materials they typically handled were either content area textbooks, rewritten and simplified versions of literature, or short stories and texts written for the "reluctant reader." Because the adults we work with had low grades in English classes, they were never assigned to the higher track nor given creative writing assignments and really good literature.

As a result, many of our students expect to use reading and writing to get better jobs or look better in their children's eyes when they help them with homework assignments, but they don't see literature that they read or write as doing what Gardner says it can: "True art clarifies life, establishes models of human action, casts nets towards the future, carefully judges our right and our wrong directions, celebrates and mourns" (1978, p.100).

Reading and writing poetry opens our students' eyes to what literacy can mean; it helps them see the difference between knowing *how* to read and *wanting* to read to understand themselves and their world better.

A second reason for using poetry with adults, as an obvious corollary to the first, is that the material intrinsically motivates reading, writing, and talking with others in

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Francis E. Kazemek teaches on the Department of Education at Eastern Washington University at Cheney. Pat Rigg is a consultant with American Language and Literacy in Spokane, Washington.

and out of class. When adults use language in what Britton calls the *poetic* mode, they are able to "take it up as it were in the role of spectators" (1982, p. 37). They are able to observe and explore their own past lives, imagined futures, and to dream of impossible events. Poetry allows adults to participate through metaphor, dream, make believe, and symbolism skillfully used in that which makes human life an intellectual and imaginative adventure.

A third reason for using poetry with adults who are beginning to read and write is that, if carefully selected, poetry is easy to read and write, often easier than the practice job applications in the literacy textbook (Weibel, 1983). The ideas and images of poems are readily accessible to adults, or can be if the poetry is chosen to fit the students.

Characteristics to look for

Poetry for adult beginning readers and writers is easier to read when it is predictable, both in ideas and form. Poetry which connects in some real way to the adult's life—poetry which, as Emily Dickinson said, makes one feel as though one's head will explode—will be much easier to read than the poetry that does not. Poetry that deals with familiar themes or ideas, has clearly developed patterns and sequences, uses repeated words, phrases, or lines, and employs an identifiable rhythm or meter (not necessarily rhyme) is generally easiest to read.

Poetry written in familiar language or in a vernacular is usually easier than poems in stilted or archaic "literary" language. Rhymed poetry is often the only kind that many adults consider to be real poetry. Yet rhyme is not necessarily an element of predictability; the use of a particular rhyme scheme often results in unusual diction or twisted, unnatural syntax. Any rhymed poetry therefore needs close examination before it is used in the literacy classroom.

Four poets

Here we briefly discuss four poets, much of whose work can be used with adults at all levels of literacy development. Carl Sandburg, Lucille Clifton, William Carlos Williams, and Langston Hughes are all American and all contemporary. We have selected them as models because of their genius with language, their wide range of themes and ideas, and because their work is readily available, relatively inexpensive in paperback, and in most libraries.

We hope, of course, that reading their poems leads to further exploration of other poets' work.

Carl Sandburg

Sandburg's poetry is rooted in the commonplace; he writes of everyday themes and everyday people. The colloquial language of his poems has a rhythmical vitality. Often they sound like the people who, Sandburg said, "sometimes talk like poetry without writing it, but they don't know they are talking poetry" (1958, p.14). Sandburg's humor, wit, and frequent irony all help to make his poetry especially appropriate for use with adults. Let's look at a poem from *Early Moon* (1958, p. 45), an inexpensive paperback selection of Sandburg's poetry.

Buffalo Dusk

The buffaloes are gone.
And those who saw the buffaloes are
  gone.
Those who saw the buffaloes by
  thousand and how they pawed
  the prairie sod into dust with
  their hoofs, their great heads down
  pawing on in a great pageant of dusk
Those who saw the buffaloes are gone.
And the buffaloes are gone.

[From *Smoke and Steel* by Carl Sandburg, © 1920 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.; renewed 1948 by C. Sandburg. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.]

This elegiac poem captures the sense of irretrievable loss that comes with understanding that a particular creature and, indeed, an entire way of life are no more. Sandburg's use of simple but eloquent repetition heightens the underlying pathos of the poem. Every adult has longed for a time that is no more; this poem speaks to that longing.

The theme of "Buffalo Dusk" can elicit a wide range of response and discussion, from a political exploration of the past and present plight of Native Americans, to a consideration of some more personal loss. The language helps make this poem predictable, both in its vividness and in its repetition.

In another poem in the same collection (p. 97), Sandburg explores the nature of fame and power:

Soup

I saw a famous man eating soup.
I say he was lifting a fat broth
Into his mouth with a spoon.
His name was in the newspapers that day
Spelled out in tall black headlines
And thousands of people were talking
  about him.

When I saw him
He sat bending his head over a plate
Putting soup in his mouth with a spoon.

[From *Smoke and Steel*, © 1920 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.; © 1948 by Carl Sandburg. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.]

The simple declarative language and syntax of "Soup" makes it readily accessible to even the beginning reader. The theme is sure to engender discussion of the lives of the rich and famous. Literacy teachers and students can use this poem as a catalyst for further exploration of power, fame, and everyday life.

Lucille Clifton

A quite different collection of poetry is *two-headed woman (1980)* by Lucille Clifton, poet and author of many children's books. In this particular collection, Clifton celebrates the joys, beauty, pain, and love of being a woman, a Black woman in particular. She speaks as a mother, a daughter, a lover, and a person deeply concerned with spiritual and religious questions. While her poetry will appeal to most people, it speaks most directly to women because of its themes and celebrations of womanhood. In "homage to my hips" (p. 6), for example, Clifton sings of her big, powerful hips with a gusto that swings the poem off the page and readers off their feet.

> these hips are big hips.
> they need space to
> move around in.
> they don't fit into little
> petty places. these hips
> are free hips.
> they don't like to be held back
> these hips have never been enslaved,
> they go where they want to go
> they do what they want to do.
> these hips are mighty hips.
> these hips are magic hips.
> I have known them
> to put a spell on a man and
> spin him like a top!

[Reprinted from *two-headed woman* by Lucille Clifton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), © 1980 by The University of Massachusetts Press. Reprinted by the permission of The University of Massachusetts Press.]

The everyday language and the repetition help to make this poem appropriate for many adults, but it is primarily the theme that makes it one literacy students read with ease and eagerness. The sheer celebration of one's body and sexuality gives the poem an energy that moves the reader, and it is this feeling that we want adult beginning readers and writers to experience from the start of their literacy instruction. This poem helps them understand that "being literate is just more fun, more joyful, than being illiterate" (Delattre, 1983, p. 54).

Since writing must be an integral part of literacy instruction (Kazemek, 1984), poems which serve as models for students' own poetry can be especially useful. Clifton's "homage to my hips" can serve as a catalyst for a variety of adult homages to eyes, hands, hair, and so forth. Clifton seems to have been inspired to write a companion piece, "homage to my hair" (p. 5).

homage to my hair

> when I feel her jump up and dance
> i hear the music! my God
> i'm talking about my nappy hair!
> she is a challenge to your hand
> Black man,
> she is as tasty on your tongue as
>   good greens
> Black man,
> she can touch your mind
> with her electric fingers and
> the grayer she do get, good God,
> the Blacker she do be.

[Reprinted from *two-headed woman* by Lucille Clifton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), © 1980 by The University of Massachusetts Press. Reprinted by the permission of The University of Massachusetts Press.]

Clifton's poetry doesn't use standard punctuation or grammar. It can help adults appreciate the vitality of language well used and the vigor of dialects; it can also help adults begin to explore conventions of grammar, spelling, and punctuation in print. The rest of the poems in this first rate collection are equally appropriate for use with literacy students.

William Carlos Williams

In his poetry William Carlos Williams tried to capture what he called the "American idiom" — the music and vitality of American speech. Accordingly, many of his poems read like prose that simply has been broken at certain points to give it the look of poetry. But that is only how they look: Those poems that most seem like prose move with a rhythm and sharpness of image that enable the reader and listener to see and feel the world differently, with more clarity and intensity.

Williams was a practicing medical doctor most of his life. Many of his poems are relatively short, like lines jotted between house calls or office visits. This brevity, together with the condensed American speech that Williams used and the everyday nature of his themes, make many of his poems appropriate for adults who are just beginning to see themselves as literate. In his well known "This is just to say," for example, we see how Williams is able to celebrate something as common as plums with a sharpness of imagery and a seeming simplicity of language (1966, p. 33).

> I have eaten
> the plums
> that were in
> the icebox

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and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold

[William Carlos Williams, *Collected Poems, Volume I: 1909-1939.* © 1938 by New Directions Publishing Corporation. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.]

We think this poem can be used to show adult literacy students that a famous American poet uses language that is not unlike theirs. It can help them to see the value of everyday language that they hear, use, and understand; it helps take the mystery out of what many adults fear as the most mysterious kind of language—poetry.

Several of Williams's "object" poems can also be used to help adults see how everyday language can help us focus closely and imaginatively on the most common things in life. The poems are demonstrations of using written language to see the world more clearly. "The Red Wheelbarrow" (1966, p. 21) not only makes us see the wheelbarrow but also requires us to consider its significance in the world.

so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens.

[William Carlos Williams, *Collected Poems, Volume I: 1909-1939.* © 1938 by New Directions Publishing Corporation. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.]

This kind of object poem lends itself to the exploration and composition of object poems written in class, with both students and teacher writing. Language experience strategies modified for adults can be used quite effectively with this sort of poem (Rigg and Taylor, 1979).

Finally, poems like "The Thing" (1966, p. 50) are appropriate for the kind of language play that we believe is necessary for all beginning readers and writers, whatever their age.

Each time it rings
I think it is for
me but it is
not for me nor for

anyone it merely
rings and we
serve it bitterly
together, they and I

[William Carlos Williams, *Collected Poems, Volume I: 1909-1939*. © 1938 by New Directions Publishing Corporation. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.]

This kind of language play—using language for riddles, jokes, interesting juxtapositions, paradoxes, pleasing sound arrangements, and so forth—not only helps the beginning readers and writers feel at home with the language in its written form, but also helps them to better understand its almost infinite possibilities.

Langston Hughes

Langston Hughes was a prolific author and an articulate, impassioned spokesperson for Black people. However, his poetry, stories, plays, and essays, whether they are written in Black English vernacular or in Standard English, have a universal character that makes them meaningful and memorable to both Black and White, young and old.

We believe that Hughes' early poetry, especially the collection *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems* (1959), can be used effectively with most adults to help them appreciate the beauty of his poetry and his skillful use of language. Moreover, Hughes' poetry often inspires exploration and discussion of themes that are important to all of us, such as love, friendship, and ethnic pride. An example is "Poem" (1959, p. 12), one that we like and have successfully used with several adults:

I loved my friend.
He went away from me.
There's nothing more to say.
The poem ends,
Soft as it began—
I loved my friend.

[Langston Hughes, *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*. © 1959 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.]

The simple, declarative nature of this poem, the repetition of the line "I loved my friend" and the almost haunting, largely unexplainable pathos that it evokes in most readers all serve to make this a poem that can be used over and over again with adult students. As one of ours remarked, "Yeah, that's just the way it is. That's what happened to me and one of my friends."

"Dreams" (1959, p. 7) appears in numerous anthologies. Although it can be found in basal readers for elementary school students, we think that it is most appropriate for adults who have lost dreams.

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow

[Langston Hughes, *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*. © 1959 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.]

The images are sharp: Life is a broken-winged bird; life is a barren, frozen field. The two ballad stanzas both state the same cause-effect relationship, so that the repetition of structure as well as of phrases contributes to both its effectiveness and its predictability. This poem leads into class writing, both individual and group collaborative poems.

Hughes is widely known for his prose stories and his narrative poetry, often written in Black English vernacular. His use of dialect shows how important to Hughes is each individual (because he lets each individual speak with his/her own voice) and the individual's life, stories, hopes, and dreams. "Aunt Sue's Stories" (1959, p. 65) begins:

Aunt Sue has a head full of stories.
Aunt Sue has a whole heart full of stories.
Summer nights on the front porch
Aunt Sue cuddles a brown-faced child to
her bosom
And tells him stories....

[Langston Hughes, *Don't You Turn Back*. © 1959 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.]

Aunt Sue goes on to tell stories of slavery and stories that came "right out of her own life."

All of us have stories that come right out of our own lives. Most of us never get those stories, those lives, on paper, and something important in the world is lost. Adults with a history of failure in school and with reading and writing almost certainly have not even begun to put their stories, their lives, on paper. We believe that poetry like "Aunt Sue's Stories" can get adults to talk, write, and read about their own lives. The oral history and interview techniques demonstrated in *The Foxfire Book* (Wigginton, 1972) and discussed by Rigg (1985) offer the means to get these stories down on paper.

Techniques for using poetry

We have referred throughout this article to poetry writing and have mentioned a few techniques: language experience, oral history, group collaboration. Because we focus on the work of four American poets and how that work is appropriate for adults who are beginning to see themselves as literate people, we will not go into specifics of writing instruction in the literacy setting (See Kazemek, 1984, for suggestions). Three techniques that help adult literacy students read poetry are reading aloud, rereading and discussing.

Reading aloud. If you introduce a poem to your students by reading it aloud yourself, you are doing three things.
(1) You are giving the poetry some of its life that is often hidden when the poem lies flat on its page.
(2) You are making it easy for your students to read the poem when they see the printed copy.
(3) You are spinning a thread between yourself and your students, making a bond.
(3) is as important as (1) and (2).

We talked earlier about how poetry can help us know ourselves, but it can also help us know each other. When we read "homage to my hips" to our students, we let our enjoyment show; when we read Hughes' "Poem" we give it the thoughtful silence afterwards that it deserves. Our students see and hear by the way we read them aloud that the poems speak to us, and that we delight in sharing with our students something that we feel is terribly important and something that we love.

Rereading. We read the poem again, this time while our students have copies in front of them. Why again? Most poetry is tightly packed with expression; unlike reading a newspaper report, we don't get the best of a poem by skimming and scanning. We don't mean that our students plod through line by line. That destroys both the poem and any interest in it that we or our students had.

But rereading a poem that we enjoy two or three times gives us and our students more than one chance for the poem to live for all of us. It's like making a friend: If you give a poem the sort of glance that you give strangers on the street, the poem will stay a stranger, and you won't even remember its face. Rereading also makes the poem more readable for the adults who are just beginning to see themselves as literate people.

Discussion is the third technique we use constantly. After rereading, we often invite comments. We don't try to tell our students what any poem means, since it will mean something different to each person. We have had quite interesting discussions about the poems we've brought to our students that were as intense and intellectually stimulating as any we've sat through in graduate English literature seminars. These discussions came about through our listening to the students' comments, and directing their questions to each other and the group as a whole, rather than trying to answer those questions ourselves.

More readable and more fun

The work of Sandburg, Clifton, Williams and Hughes contains many poems that we believe can be used with adults at all levels of literacy development. (See the accompanying list of other collections of these four poets.)

There is a common assumption that poetry is only for those who have already demonstrated their literacy competency in some way; we believe that this is a misconception. We have used the poems we've mentioned here and many, many others with adults who swore they could not read a single word. The result of our experience is that we strongly believe that this sort of poetry is not only readable by adult beginning students of reading and writing, but it is more readable than many of the commercial materials available. And it's much more fun.

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Cambridge, MA 02138
Phone: (617) 495-2178
James Clark, Executive Director

ACCESS is a national nonprofit organization which provides job referral, information and communication services in the nonprofit sector. ACCESS further strengthens the nonprofit sector by meeting the needs of individual job seekers and nonprofit organizations. ACCESS publishes *Opportunities in Non-Profit Organizations*, a book of nationally available job openings. The job listings are updated monthly and are available at subscribing college and university career centers and other referral centers. Survey packets are sent to nonprofit organizations to determine basic background information and current personnel needs. Interested nonprofits can submit job listings to ACCESS at no cost. ACCESS also performs job searches for individuals who cannot avail themselves of a campus guidance office. Students interested in full-time literacy work can contact ACCESS for specific job opportunities.

ACTION
VISTA and Student Community Service
1100 Vermont Avenue, N.W., 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20525
Phone: (800) 424-8867 or (202) 634-9445
Patricia Rodgers, Director of VISTA and Student Community Service

ACTION is an independent federal agency that operates a series of volunteer programs. Anyone 18-65 years of age can apply to become a VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) volunteer and then receive a stipend to support their work with a local community agency. College service organizations and local volunteer agencies working with students can apply for support from the Student Commuity Service Program.

In 1986, a literacy component was established in VISTA through the Domestic Volunteer Service Act Amendments. The purpose of the VISTA Literacy Corps is to alleviate illiteracy through collaboration with community, volunteer, and private sector resources. VISTA volunteers also help to coordinate viable financial and volunteer resources for promoting literacy within the United States. Goals of the program include efforts to increase cooperative arrangements between public and private sectors; to increase public awareness of illiteracy; and to encourage literacy throughout the United States.

Write to VISTA Literacy Corps for information on program development and funding, tutor training, learner recruitment, and other information pertaining to literacy programs.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE)

Office of Vocational and Adult Education
Division of Adult Education
Mary E. Switzer Building, Room 4428
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-7240
Phone: (202) 732-2270
Mary Hanrahan, Acting Director

As the largest adult basic skills program in the United States, Adult Basic Education (ABE) provides services to adults ages 16 years or older who have completed less than 12 years of school and are not currently enrolled in an education program. The ABE program is not only group oriented, but also includes one-on-one tutoring in both reading and writing instruction as well as basic skills instruction. Through ABE, limited English speakers can participate in ESL training and those with basic skills can work to obtain their GED.

Contact local ABE programs and ask how their work relates to your literacy project and what resources, relative to your program, are available. ABE is a good contact for learners after they have mastered reading skills and are ready to continue their education.

ADULT LITERACY INITIATIVE (ALI)

United States Department of Education
Mary E. Switzer Building
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-7240
Phone: (202) 732-2959
Mary Hanrahan, Acting Director
Martha Clement, Editor of *The Update*

On September 7, 1983, President Reagan established the Adult Literacy Initiative (ALI) in an effort to focus attention on and to increase awareness of the adult literacy problem in the United States. The goals of ALI are coordination of federal literacy activities, creation of new resources concerning the issues of illiteracy, and promotion of citizen involvement in efforts to diminish illiteracy. ALI encourages involvement of college students, businesses, industry, church groups, and civic organizations to help alleviate the problems caused by illiteracy. *The Update* is a regular publication of the ALI. It provides resource and program information at no cost to literacy programs.

Write to ALI for information regarding this national effort. The information provided may include state program profiles as well as updates on legislation pertaining to the literacy issue.

ADULT LITERACY AND TECHNOLOGY PROJECT

PCC INC.
2682 Bishop Drive, Suite 107
San Ramon, CA 94583
Phone: (415) 830-4200

The Adult Literacy and Technology Project was started in 1985 to support the development of technology in adult literacy programs, applying the unique capabilities of technology to the areas of management and instruction and helping to provide solutions for the national problem of functional illiteracy.

The purpose of the Adult Literacy and Technology Project is to create an effective dissemination system which will provide ready access to information on computers and other forms of technology, including selection of hardware and software, training, curriculum design, funding, evaluation, and organizational recommendations for adult literacy programs. The Adult Literacy and Technology Project sponsors an annual conference; coordinates a network of literacy services, business, industry, labor, research, and government; and publishes a regular newsletter and a literacy software guide. Contact PCC for a list of regional technology consultants.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION (AAACE)

1112 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Suite 420
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 463-6333
Judy Koloski, Executive Director

A consolidation of the former Adult Education Association and the National Association for Public and Continuing Education, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) is the national membership association of people interested in and involved with adult education — including literacy volunteers. AAACE produces professional development materials regarding adult education, publishes a newsletter ten times a year as well as a journal eight times a year.

As your program grows, AAACE will become an increasingly valuable source of information. In the early stages of program development, it may prove helpful to obtain information from the national office regarding your state AAACE branch. Also, ask to be put on the AAACE mailing lists, both state and national. Mailings will keep you updated on the progress being made in the field of adult education. AAACE holds an annual state conference which has many workshops on literacy and related topics.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES (AACJ)
One Dupont Circle, N.W., Suite 410
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 293-7050
Connie Odems, Contact

AACJC has 1,200 community, technical, and junior college members. Ninety percent of these are involved with ABE, GED, and/or adult literacy programs. AACJC's work on behalf of adult literacy has included a teleconference on illiteracy in the work force (June 1987) and a national survey of literacy programs. AACJC also distributes publications, some of which highlight the literacy work of member organizations. These include a journal, a biweekly newspaper, and a monthly newsletter. Contact AACJC for information on what local community and junior colleges are doing in the area of adult literacy.

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION TASK FORCE ON LITERACY
1800 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 331-2287
Dick P. Lynch, Director

The American Bar Association (ABA) Task Force on Literacy provides state and local bar associations with information on illiteracy and suggests ways lawyers and their associations can provide support to literacy organizations. The Bar Association sponsored the Lawyers For Literacy: National Executive Forum in 1987 and has produced *Lawyers For Literacy: A Bar Leadership Manual*. Students who are interested in the law or who are in law school can contact the ABA for information and advice.

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: (312) 944-6780
Sibyl Moses, Coordinator

The American Library Association is the oldest library organization in the world and has more than 47,000 members. Part of the Association's work is its effort to promote literacy among adults and children. ALA has been instrumental in encouraging federal funding for literacy efforts and working with national leaders to support literacy programs. The Association also publishes resource books dealing with the issue of adult literacy; produces and distributes posters, booklets, and brochures encouraging learning to read and volunteering to help others learn; promotes awareness among librarians about the issue of illiteracy; and includes workshops on illiteracy at its annual conference. Contact ALA for a listing of contacts in state library agencies and for information about other ALA resources.

AMERICAN NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION (ANPA)
P.O. Box 17407, Dulles International Airport
Washington, DC 20041
Phone: (202) 648-1000
Carolyn Ebel-Chandler, Literacy Coordinator

Based on the belief that newspapers have both the expertise and resources that local literacy efforts need, ANPA urges its 1,400 member publishers to follow three basic steps in organizing a literacy initiative. First, they are advised to form a task force within the newspaper to act as a guide for the company's literacy efforts. The newspaper then ought to determine the extent of its initial literacy efforts. Finally, the newspaper should provide a focus by implementing a specific project and then publicizing it.

The association has a three-year commitment to literacy called "Press to Read" and a full-time literacy coordinator. "Press to Read" materials include slide shows, guidelines for developing literacy projects, a bibliography of other projects and features, and reproducible art, including cartoons. Literacy coordinator Carolyn Ebel-Chandler will make presentations to local, regional, and state press associations or literacy groups. Contact her for more information.

ASSAULT ON ILLITERACY PROGRAM (AOIP)
410 Central Park West (PH-C)
New York, NY 10025
Phone: (212) 967-4008
Emille Smith, National Coordinator

The Assault on Illiteracy Program (AOIP), a coalition of more than 90 national black-led organizations, concerns itself with the literacy problems of the entire black population, especially those of adults ages 16 to 24. In their "assault on illiteracy," much emphasis is placed on the reinforcement of positive values and the effort to "uplift and support" the black population. AOIP also reviews and recommends effective materials and methods for motivating and teaching black nonreaders. AOIP produces *The Missing Link*, a training manual for school teachers and volunteer tutors that focuses on how to inspire people to become learners. AOIP also publishes *The Advancer*, a weekly newspaper insert that appears in community newspapers. The fourth-grade level insert includes crossword puzzles, articles on black and Hispanic history, tutor tips, and other helpful information for beginning readers and tutors.

AOIP is an excellent resource for programs that are geared toward a multicultural community. Contact AOIP and ask for information regarding ways in which you can better serve a specific population.

ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION (ACBE)
1806 Vernon Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20009
Phone: (202) 462-6333
Chris P. Zachariadis, Executive Director
Contact: Tracy McDonald

The Association for Community Based Education (ACBE), a national association of 100 community based organizations, focuses on community involvement with education. Established by the participating organizations, ACBE strives to empower communities to action on their own. The association of these organizations gives them a national voice, whether it be for legislative purposes or in policymaking decisions. In order to become an associate of ACBE, an organization must be community based and free standing.

The groups that ACBE works with are committed to offering learner-centered programs that will benefit the individual and the community as a whole. They facilitate a wide range of activities including adult literacy, economic development, community organizing, and job training. ACBE offers training, technical assistance, scholarships, grants, and resource publications for its members.

Write ACBE and ask for names of member organizations in or around your area. A number of them may need the tutors your school can provide.

BARBARA BUSH FOUNDATION FOR FAMILY LITERACY
1002 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20007
Phone: (202) 338-2006
Benita Somerfield, Executive Director

With a start-up fund of approximately $1 million, the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy seeks to support intergenerational literacy programs. Money will be targeted to training and dissemination of materials.

BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR EFFECTIVE LITERACY (BCEL)
1221 Avenue of the Americas, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10020
Phone: (212) 512-2415 or 512-2412
Harold W. McGraw, President
Gail Spangenberg, Vice President

The Business Council for Effective Literacy (BCEL), a publicly supported foundation, was established to augment awareness about functional illiteracy in the United States and to encourage business involvement in the literacy field. Major efforts in this area include a newsletter, circulated throughout the country to professionals concerned with the problem of illiteracy. BCEL has a small staff that works with educational and business leaders seeking to strengthen literacy efforts.

Businesses can provide helpful information and even support to your literacy project. Contact BCEL and ask to be placed on their mailing list. They provide excellent materials concerning literacy and the role businesses can play in an effort to promote literacy.

CAMPUS COMPACT:
THE PROJECT FOR PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICE
Box 1975, Brown University
Providence, RI 02912
Phone: (401) 863-1119
Susan Stroud, Director

Campus Compact: The Project for Public and Community Service is a coalition of college and university presidents established to create public service opportunities for their students, and to develop, on a national level, the expectation of service as an integral part of student life. The staff of Campus Compact provides resources and technical assistance to help implement and expand service programs. These services include: regional workshops, site visits to campuses, a newsletter, and clearinghouse of collegiate community service programs.

On the national level, Campus Compact staff administers two programs to increase opportunities for student involvement in community service: the Student Humanitarian Award of $1,500 which is awarded to five outstanding student humanitarians, and the Peace Corps Internship Program, which sends approximately 20 students to work for 10-15 weeks in Peace Corps offices that are located in developing countries. Campus Compact members pursue federal and state policy that encourages student involvement in public service activity while reducing the financial disincentives for doing community service work. Campus Compact members also promote public awareness about the value of civic involvement as part of the college experience through media campaigns.

CAMPUS OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY LEAGUE (COOL)
386 McNeal Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55108-1011
Phone: (612) 624-3018
Julia Scatliff, Executive Director

The Campus Outreach Opportunity League is a national nonprofit organization which promotes and supports student involvement in community service. COOL has established a network and a community of students, staff members and organizations committed to developing strong outreach programs on campus. COOL's staff of recent college graduates provides technical assistance; publishes a newsletter and resource books; hosts an annual national conference, leadership summit, and local/state workshops; and works with several national and regional organizations to develop strategies and resources for strengthening a positive student movement based on a commitment to community service.

CARTOONISTS ACROSS AMERICA (CAA)
2705 East Seventh Street
Long Beach, CA 90804
Phone: (805) 735-5134
Philamer Tambio-Yeh, cartoonist

Cartoonists Across America (CAA) is a national grassroots organization that has produced a series of bimonthly comic books promoting literacy. Using his creativity and a heavy dose of humor, Phil Yeh has created a fun approach to the serious issues literacy presents. CAA travels across the country drawing free cartoons and working with schools and literacy organizations to promote reading.

If you would like to have the cartoonists appear in your community, write or call them at the above address. The cartoonists' approach to the issue of literacy is unlike most but their purpose is the basically the same, and you will enjoy the perspective they offer on literacy.

COALITION FOR LITERACY
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: (312) 944-6780
Sibyl Moses, Director

Created in 1981, the Coalition for Literacy consists of over twenty organizations dedicated to promoting literacy in the United States. The Coalition's purpose is to inform U.S. citizens about the problem of illiteracy and to encourage them to take an active role in solving the problem. In January 1985, the Coalition, in conjunction with the Ad Council, launched "Volunteer Against Illiteracy," a three-year media campaign designed to increase national awareness about illiteracy and to recruit volunteer tutors to take part in literacy efforts.

Contact the Coalition for Literacy and ask for information about the organizations involved in this collaborative effort, or on how you can get involved.

COLLEGE WORK-STUDY LITERACY PROJECT
The Adult Literacy Initiative
Room 510, Reporters Building
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202
Phone: (202) 732-2959
Mary Hanrahan, Acting Director

As part of the Adult Literacy Initiative, the United States Department of Education developed a college work-study demonstration program in an effort to foster adult literacy in the United States. Eighteen colleges and universities established adult literacy programs or collaborated with a community literacy program. The schools received increased funding to pay work-study students for their involvement in the literacy programs. Participants in the program report improved community relations as well as new contacts with local service agencies.

If it is possible at your institution, you may want to recruit work-study students for your literacy program. Students can function as tutors, work on development projects, or coordinate activities from the office level. Talk to the work-study coordinator and try to get interested work-study students involved.

CONTACT LITERACY CENTER
c/o Contact Center, Inc.
P.O. Box 81826
Lincoln, NE 68501
Phone: (402) 464-0602
National toll-free hotline: (800) 228-8813
Cece Hill, Literacy Services Director

Founded in 1978 as a project of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, the Contact Literacy Center serves as a clearinghouse for information on the literacy issue. The Center utilizes a toll free telephone hotline in its effort to increase nationwide awareness of adult illiteracy. CLC has also compiled a listing of organizations across the country working to promote literacy. Use a toll-free number to obtain information on adult literacy and the efforts being made to promote it.

CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (CEA)
4321 Hartwick Road, Suite L-208
College Park, MD 20740
Phone: (301) 490-1440
Contact: Steven Steurer

The Correctional Educational Association, founded in 1946, is a nonprofit, professional association serving educators and administrators who provide services to young men and women in correctional settings. CEA's goals include increasing the effectiveness of its members, involving its members in an active and supportive network, providing technical assistance to improve the quality of educational programs, and representing the interest of correctional educators on all levels. Call your local jail or state penal institution to contact educators working in those institutions.

DIVISION OF ADULT EDUCATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Reporter's Building, Room 522
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-5515
Phone: (202) 732-2276

The Division of Adult Education (DAE) is responsible for providing a wide range of services for adult education and for promoting the development of resources pertaining to adult education. Currently, the DAE administers the federally funded Adult Education Act (AEA). AEA is the main federal program that provides adults with literacy projects as well as basic education projects. In conjunction with these responsibilities, the DAE formulates policies and programs focusing on the special needs of those adults who lack basic skills. The Division also maintains cooperative relations with federal, state, local, and private educational organizations.

ERIC: CLEARINGHOUSE ON ADULT CAREER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210
Phone: (614) 292-4353
Dr. Susan Imel, Director

ERIC: Clearinghouse on Adult Career and Vocational Education, a federally funded educational database, primarily concerns itself with entering into the database specific information on adult literacy. There are clearinghouses throughout the United States, each focusing on different aspects of education. The ERIC Clearinghouse collects materials that ordinarily would not be accessible to public/private literacy projects such as conference papers, resource reports, and grant reports. Consult your university library for help in searching ERIC's resource materials. Contact the Center for information concerning ERIC's literacy materials.

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF ADULT LITERACY

Penn State University
248 Calder Way, Suite 307
University Park, PA 16801
Phone: (814) 863-3777
Eunice N. Askov, Director

Established in 1985 by the College of Education at Penn State University, the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy works to provide a research base in the field. Its hope is to build and improve upon the techniques used in basic reading instruction by working from a research-oriented foundation. The Institute serves in a leadership capacity by delivering literacy services in a coordinated manner.

The Institute has incorporated its goals into the following issues: technology in adult literacy, intergenerational literacy, literacy staff training, literacy skills in the workplace, and the issue of illiteracy among the special needs population. Contact the Institute to receive a copy of their publications list.

INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION (IRA)

P.O. Box 8139
800 Barksdale Road
Newark, DE 19714-8139
Phone: (302) 731-1600
Dr. Ronald Mitchell, Executive Director

444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 321
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 347-3990
Richard M. Long, Washington representative

Founded in 1956, the International Reading Association (IRA) focuses on reading. As a professional organization, IRA provides a forum for the exchange of ideas in order to improve reading instruction, to encourage people to read, and to promote the development of individuals' reading proficiency. There are approximately 1,150 autonomous IRA councils nationwide.

Contact the IRA for information concerning reading encouragement and methods of instruction.

JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT (JTPA)

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Washington, DC 20210
Phone: (202) 535-0580
Robert Colombo, Director

Established under the Reagan administration, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) ensures job training for economically disadvantaged youth and unskilled adults. Since the federal funding for this program is used to prepare persons for jobs, literacy education can, in some cases, provide the foundation necessary for successful training. Persons benefiting from this act may need the services your literacy program offers.

Contact JTPA and ask for the names of representatives/public officers in your area who are implementing the act. Use the information you receive from your representative as a resource for your recruiting efforts.

LAUBACH LITERACY ACTION (LLA)
1320 Jamesville Avenue, P.O. Box 131
Syracuse, NY 13210
Phone: (315) 422-9121
Peter Waite, Executive Director

Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) is a national volunteer literacy organization which provides free tutoring for adults. LLA provides volunteer training in reading, tutoring ESL and writing for new readers. New Readers Press, the publishing division of LLA, produces adult learning materials, supplemental books, and a weekly newspaper for beginning readers. Tutor training courses provided by certified LLA trainers are recommended for college credit by the American Council on Education.

DIVISION OF LIBRARY PROGRAMS
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education
555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20208-5571
Phone: (202) 357-6293
Dr. Anne Matthews, Director

The Division of Library Programs works with public libraries that are funded under the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). Under Title I of the Act, each state receives a monetary allocation which is then distributed to libraries throughout the state. Under Title VI of the LSCA, Library Programs give grants to local and state public libraries throughout the country specifically to support literacy projects.

Libraries are one of the most helpful resources you can tap into when trying to establish, develop, and direct a literacy program. Not only do they provide a wealth of reading material, but they may also have an existing literacy program or the means with which to start one. Contact your local library and ask about existing programs or the possibility of collaborating with them to start a program. For grant information, write to the address above for pertinent materials. Contact your local library about the possibility of joining efforts to begin (or strengthen) a local literacy program.

LITERACY EDUCATION FOR THE ELDERLY PROGRAM (LEEP)
National Council on Aging
600 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20024
Phone: (202) 479-1200
Sylvia Liroff, Director of Older Adult Education

The goal of Literacy Education for the Elderly Program (LEEP) is to bring literacy education to older adults. Elderly persons are trained as tutors and then provide reading instruction as well as peer support to older learners. Although LEEP's primary purpose is founded in literacy education, the program is currently attempting to broaden the interest in literacy by developing new resources as well as networks of existing programs.

Write to the National Council on Aging (NCOA) and ask to be put on the mailing list for updates on this organization's projects and materials. The NCOA has several publications for sale including: *Organizing a Literacy Program for Older Adults, Tutoring Older Adults Literacy Programs* and *Update on Healthy Aging.*

THE LITERACY NETWORK
7505 Metro Boulevard
Minneapolis, MN 55435
Phone: (612) 893-7661
Jean Hammink, Director

The Literacy Network was established to support the development and enhancement of literacy for all individuals in society. They accomplish their goals by strengthening local, state, and national collaborative literacy initiatives through the dissemination of information, training assistance, policy development, and literacy advocacy. An implicit ideal that is stressed in the Network is that cooperation, collaboration, and communication around common goals bring about progress. They work from the belief that literacy is a human right as well as an integral part of the broader scope of economic opportunity and security, social justice, and human dignity. Contact the Literacy Network for information and technical assistance.

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA, INC. (LVA)
5795 Widewaters Parkway
Syracuse, NY 13214
Phone: (315) 445-8000
Jinx Crouch, President

Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) is a national, nonprofit organization which works to increase literacy through a network of community volunteer literacy programs. These affiliates provide individualized learner-centered instruction in both basic reading and English as a Second Language for adults and teenagers. More than 60,000 tutors and learners are involved in nearly 365 programs located in 38 states.

LVA provides training materials for volunteer tutors and program managers, coordinates and supports the services of its own network, and provides technical assistance to other groups interested in literacy such as adult basic education agencies, correctional facilities, libraries, corporations, and public schools.

LITLINE
SpecialNet
2021 K Street, N.W., Suite 315
Washington, DC 20006
Phone: (202) 732-2959
Contact: Gloria Shade

LitLine is a national computer-based communications system designed to process and transmit up-to-the-minute information on adult literacy-related issues. LitLine, one of the Adult Literacy Initiative's crucial efforts, operates through SpecialNet, an educationally oriented telecommunications system. The services provided by LitLine include computer conferencing, electronic mail, and electronic bulletin boards, in an attempt to promote better coordination among literacy programs. The cost is $25.00 for setup charges and a minimum $15.00 use charge per month.

Membership may be somewhat expensive for a newly established program, but LitLine provides an informative communications service for those interested in literacy issues.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF BUSINESS (NAB)
1201 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202/ 289-2888
Contact: Ted Buck

The National Alliance for Business (NAB) is involved in linking members of the business community who need literacy skills assistance to maintain productivity with local service agencies that can provide these skills. NAB also gathers data on a business approach to workplace literacy programs. They serve as consultants, performing on-site literacy audits to assess the needs of individual companies. Because NAB has contacts in both the business and service sides of the issue they are well-suited to meet the needs of adults and businesses with literacy problems. Contact NAB for more information.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY LITERACY
1 Riverfront Plaza, Suite 608
Louisville, KY 40202
Phone: (502) 584-1133
Sharon Darling, Director

The purpose of the National Center for Family Literacy is to expand the efforts of the nation to break the cycle of low literacy that exists in many families. The Center has helpful books and resource materials that focus on the development of family literacy projects as well as information about successful existing progams.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES (NCLD)
99 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10016
Phone: (212) 687-7211
Sheila Plank, Director
Dr. Julie Gilligan, Director of Communications and Public Affairs

NCLD, formerly the Foundation for Children with Learning Disabilities, promotes public awareness about learning disabilities, neurological disorders and deficits which can be a barrier to literacy. An estimated one out of ten families has a child or adult with a learning disability. NCLD provides resources and referrals on a national level to a wide range of volunteers and professionals who touch the lives of people with this hidden handicap, supporting their efforts to become self-sufficient. NCLD's innovative grantmaking, legislative advocacy, publications and training seminars assist employers, parents, educators, physicians, nurses, social workers, and psychologists in this country and abroad.

For more information concerning NCLD's programs and services, contact the Center.

PROJECT LITERACY U.S. (ABC/PBS PLUS)

PLUS contacts are:

Jack Harr, Project Director
Capital Cities/ABC Inc., 14th Floor
1330 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10019
(212) 456-6356

Margot Woodwell, Director
PBS, WQED TV
4802 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 622-1492

Regional coordinators for the Public Television Outreach Alliance are:

Eastern Region:	
Nancy Caliman	(703) 998-2722
Southern Region:	
Angie Krusenklaus	(606) 233-3000
Western Region	
Sharon Griggins	(206) 443-6745
Midwest Region:	
Roselle Kovitz	(402) 472-3611

Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) is a major media outreach campaign spearheaded by ABC and PBS. The two networks have combined resources to help raise awareness of the problem of illiteracy in the United States. News shows and features, documentaries, made-for-TV movies as well as prime time shows and soap operas deal with the subject of illiteracy on a regular basis. In addition to programming to raise awareness, ABC and PBS stations have convened task forces and are working now to meet the demand for tutoring and information that PLUS has stimulated. Beginning in the fall of 1989, PLUS will concentrate on the mentoring of children and teens by addressing the problems of adolescence.

Contact the nearest regional coordinator (see listings above) for more information about the PLUS task force in your area.

PUSH LITERACY ACTION NOW (PLAN)

1332 G Street, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003
Phone: (202) 547-8903
Mike Fox, Director

PLAN, Inc. is a privately funded, nonprofit adult literacy program whose goals are to meet the literacy and human development needs of low literate adults, and to change the conditions that cause and perpetuate illiteracy. PLAN's programs are based on the understanding that illiteracy is a social, economic and political as well as an educational issue. In addition to small group classes, PLAN offers a program, TURN (Take Up Reading Now) which provides support and advocacy services for parents with low literacy skills and Literacy Helping Services to help meet the immediate needs of adults with reading problems.

PLAN publishes a national newsletter, *The Ladder*, for advocates, community workers, teachers, and administrators in the field of adult literacy. The bimonthly publication features legislative updates, monitors local and national literacy efforts, and regularly discusses literacy techniques, commentary and profiles of adult learners. Other services include workplace and specialized literacy training; professional and volunteer training; consulting to professionals in media, business and education; and conferences and workshops.

THE ORTON DYSLEXIA SOCIETY

724 York Road
Baltimore, MD 21204
Phone: (800) ABC-D123

The Orton Dyslexia Society is an international organization concerned with specific language difficulty or developmental dyslexia. As a society, its members have joined together because they have found value in an approach to language learning which is broad in its multidisciplinary coverage and specific to the language learning problem. The aims of the Orton Dyslexia Society in the field of dyslexia are to improve understanding, to promote research, to share knowledge, and to encourage appropriate teaching of dyslexia.

The Society publishes as a service to its members, *Annals of Dyslexia*, which comes out each fall and *Perspectives*, which appears four times a year. Many other materials on various aspects of the problems and treatment of language difficulties are available. Contact the Society for more information.

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL (RIF)
600 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Suite 500
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, DC 20560
Phone: (202) 287-3220
Ruth Graves, President

Founded in 1966 by Margaret S. McNamara, Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution. The primary objective of RIF is to encourage and enable children to read by providing them with books. As the largest reading motivation program in the United States, RIF works through local programs bringing books to children and young people throughout the nation. It should be emphasized that RIF DOES NOT PROVIDE BOOKS for the programs. Rather, local RIF programs choose and order books from selected book suppliers with whom RIF has arranged nationwide discounts. New RIF programs are responsible for raising their own book funds. "Children who read grow up to become adults who can read." With this basic philosophy, RIF's efforts to encourage children to read lay the foundation for literate adults of the future.

Contact RIF for materials regarding their program. The information they provide may prove helpful to your efforts in promoting reader motivation.

STUDENT COALITION FOR ACTION IN LITERACY EDUCATION (SCALE)
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Room 102, YMCA Building
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5115
Phone: (919) 962-2333
Lisa Madry and Clay Thorp, Co-Directors

SCALE is a national network of college and university students, administrators and faculty who are committed to increased literacy in the United States. The network was developed in November 1989 by students from the Campus Y at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in conjunction with the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL). By aiding existing campus-based literacy programs, as well as supporting the development of new ones, members of the SCALE network can form a new force in literacy education. SCALE will make involvement in literacy education more accessible to college students, building a solid corps of literacy advocates for the future, while meeting the pressing needs of today.

UNITED WAY OF AMERICA

701 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: (202) 836-7100
Annette Laico, Literacy Project Director

United Way of America encourages local United Ways to promote local literacy efforts by focusing mainly on adult programs, encouraging preventative steps, and strengthening existing programs by involving related services for literacy programs. The recent United Way of America publication, *Illiteracy: A Critical Issue for United Ways* helps local United Ways to understand the link between illiteracy and other social issues. It also provides them with suggestions and resources to help implement programs in the community. Contact your local United Way to see what they are doing in your community. Write to the United Way of America for a copy of *Illiteracy: A Critical Issue for United Ways.*

WASHINGTON EDUCATION PROJECT (WEP)

224 Third Street, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003
Phone: (202) 543-3500 or (202) 547-3011
Norman Manasa, Director

Based on a program initiated in 1969 by Norman Manasa, the Washington Education Project (WEP) encourages college undergraduates to actively promote adult literacy. Mr. Manasa has designed a literacy project for interested colleges and universities to adopt as part of their standard curriculum. The project, which is actually a course, is structured to give students a learning experience outside of the classroom while they earn college credits and contribute to the community. Contact WEP for information on the project as well as advice about developing and establishing a literacy project for college students.

WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Volunteer Reading Aides (VRA)
8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631
Phone: (312) 380-2736
Faith Freitheim, Director

In January 1988, three Lutheran Church bodies merged to form the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The Women of the ELCA have assumed the role of the Lutheran Church Women who since 1968 had sponsored the Volunteer Reading Aides (VRA) program, which is the nation's largest ecumenical literacy project. The new program continues in the VRA tradition of advocacy, networking, and encouraging church members' involvement in the issue of adult literacy.

While the Women of the ELCA no longer provide direct literacy tutor training, they do maintain a literacy network and are continually providing their members with updated information and resources. Contact the Women of the ELCA for a resource catalog and for ideas on how your campus can work with local religious groups that may already have an established literacy program.

YOUTH POLICY INSTITUTE (YPI)
1221 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Suite B
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 638-2144
David L. Hackett, Executive Director

The Youth Policy Institute (YPI) is a research center that monitors national youth policy and such issues as literacy and basic skills that concern or impact youth. YPI is staffed by high school and college-age interns. Interns work along with the full-time staff to publish two monthly magazines, *Youth Policy* and *American Family*, and a biweekly *Student Press Service News Report*. If you are a student interested in a journalism or public policy internship during the summer or year off, send a resume, cover letter, and writing sample to YPI.

YOUTH SERVICE AMERICA (YSA)
1319 F Street, N.W., Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202/ 783-8855
Roger Landrum, Executive Director

Youth Service America (YSA) seeks to help make service a universal experience among youth of all backgrounds. Its intent is to create better citizens for America's future and more effectively meet some of the country's pressing needs. YSA provides technical assistance to emerging programs, publishes a newsletter, provides an informational and policy guidance network, and promotes mission-oriented programming of youth service to the elderly and academically at-risk children.

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Update Page

We would like to know who you are and what you are doing. We'd like your ideas and opinions. To add a program to the list of profiles or to share information and ideas, please fill out this form and send it to COOL at the address listed below.

Name:

Organization or Institution:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Telephone:

Description of program:

Comments about or suggestions for *Literacy Action*:

Mail to:
Campus Outreach Opportunity League
386 McNeal Hall, University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55108-1011
(612) 624-3018

COOL Publications

Building a Movement:
A Resource Book for Students in Community Service

by Wayne Meisel and Bobby Hackett. This 200-page manual gives comprehensive, practical advice on how to start and run a campus-based community service organization. It includes ideas on fundraising, program development, recruitment and promotion plans.

On Your Mark, Go! Get Set:
From Campus Ideals to Community Involvement

by Wayne Meisel and Julia Scatliff. This detailed guide provides a pragmatic, action-oriented approach on how to begin or rejuvenate a comprehensive campus community service organization.

Project Outreach Day

by Walter Moreau. An outreach day is a one-day event designed to get your entire campus involved in community service. This guide includes campus profiles, publicity ideas and planning tips.

Hunger and Homelessness Action:
A Resource Book for Colleges and Universities

by Bill Hoogterp and Jason Lejonvarn, with Leslie Samuelrich of the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness. Articles, profiles, directories and ideas for programs on community service, fundraising, and education around the issues of hunger and homelessness both in the United States and abroad.

Break Away:
A Guide to Organizing an Alternative Spring Break Program

by Aleeza Strubel. A guide for campus leaders who are establishing or expanding a spring break or extra-curricular service trip. Includes profiles of existing programs, ideas for initiating reflective components and suggestions for fundraising.

Campus Outreach: The COOL Newsletter

edited by Todd Savage. The Newsletter about Student Comunity Involvement is published five times a year and highlights individual, program and campus efforts as well as important issues, resources and coming events. Features include Postcards from Campus, First Person, Interview and Campus Calendar.

For prices and ordering information, contact:
COOL
386 McNeal Hall, University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55108-1011
(612) 624-3018